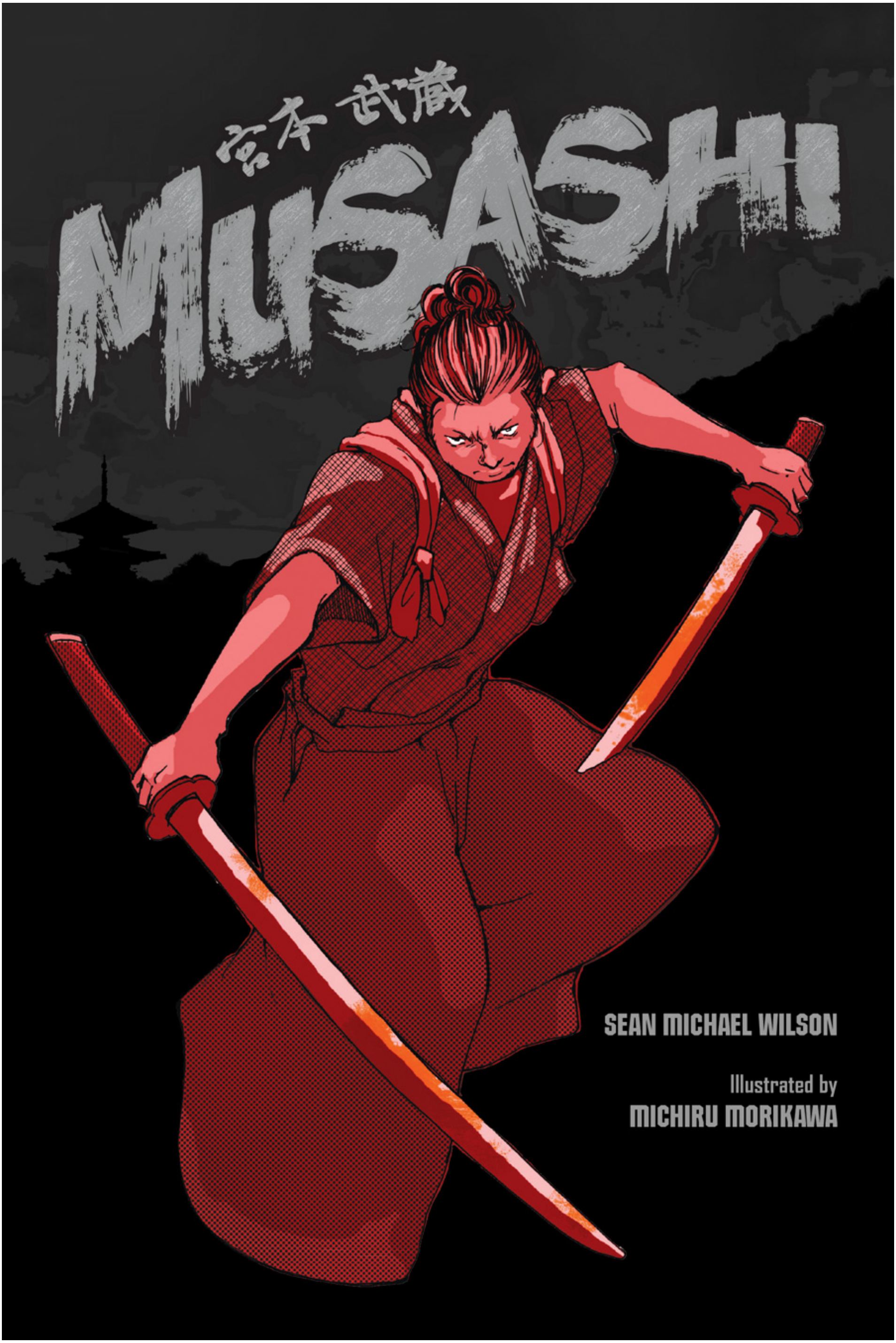

宮本 武蔵

MUSASHI

SEAN MICHAEL WILSON

Illustrated by
MICHIRU MORIKAWA

ABOUT THE BOOK

This is a graphic novel version of the life of M
samurai known throughout the world as a ma
and author of the classic *Book of Five Rings*
Michael Wilson has created both a vivid accou
Japan and a portrait of a courageous, iconocl
philosophical and spiritual ideas that are as re
time. For Musashi, the way of the martial art
rather than simply technical prowess? and it i
core teaching in *Book of Five Rings*.

This graphic novel is based on *The Lone Sam*
biography of Musashi by William Scott Wilso
on samuari history.

SEAN MICHAEL WILSON is a comic book writ
more than a dozen books published by a v
publishers, and he often works with Japanes
style books, such as *Hagakure* and *Yakuza Mo*

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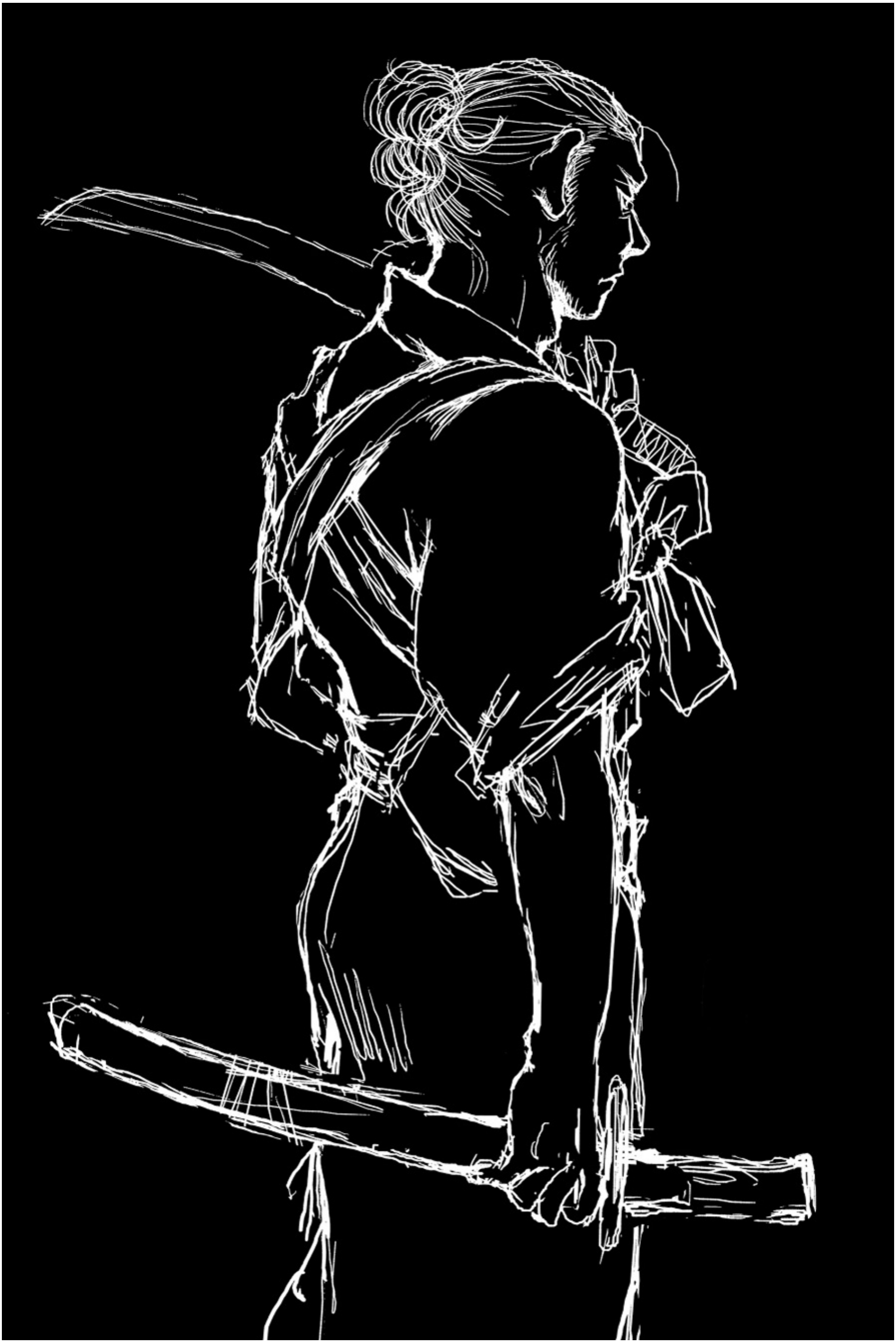
MUSASHI!



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Based on *The Lone Samurai* by William Scott Wils

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MIYAMOTO MUSASHI

(宮本　武蔵) is probably the best-known
swordsman of old Japan. He has become
iconic, almost mythic figure because he r
key aspects associated with the bushido s
was a real man, born in 1584 towards th
ring States) period. He took part in some
that established the Tokugawa dominan
Edo era, including the Battle of Sekig
Osaka Castle (1614 to 1615), and the bat
lion (1637).

Musashi's great confrontation with S
the Western Provinces," on the island n
perhaps his most famous duel. It's one
pan, and has become the subject of man
The bout was great perhaps because of

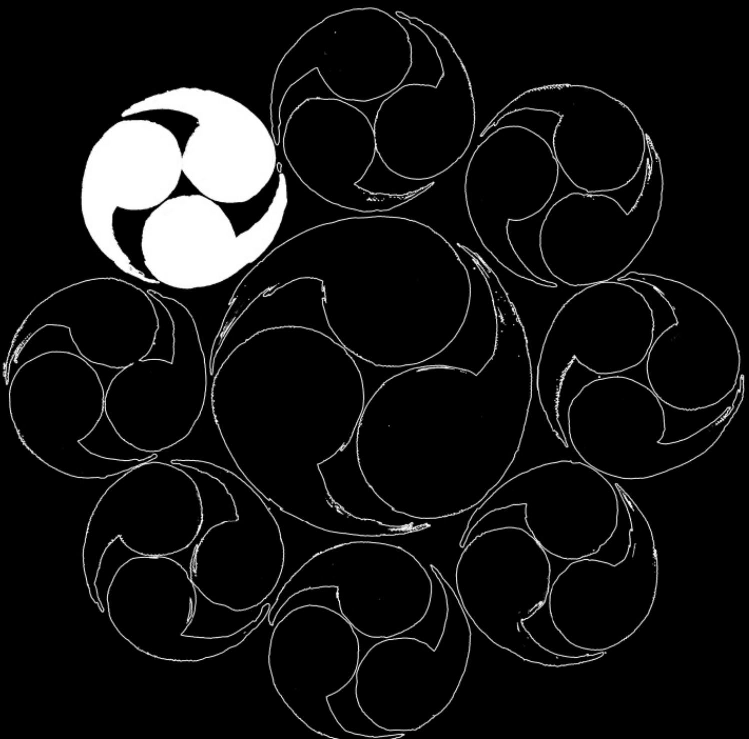
swordsmen, or the great repute in which
haps because of Musashi's cunning in s
great bout, but also a short one; almost
to have been over in less than a minute
not how such duels are normally portra
where they often go on and on, smash af

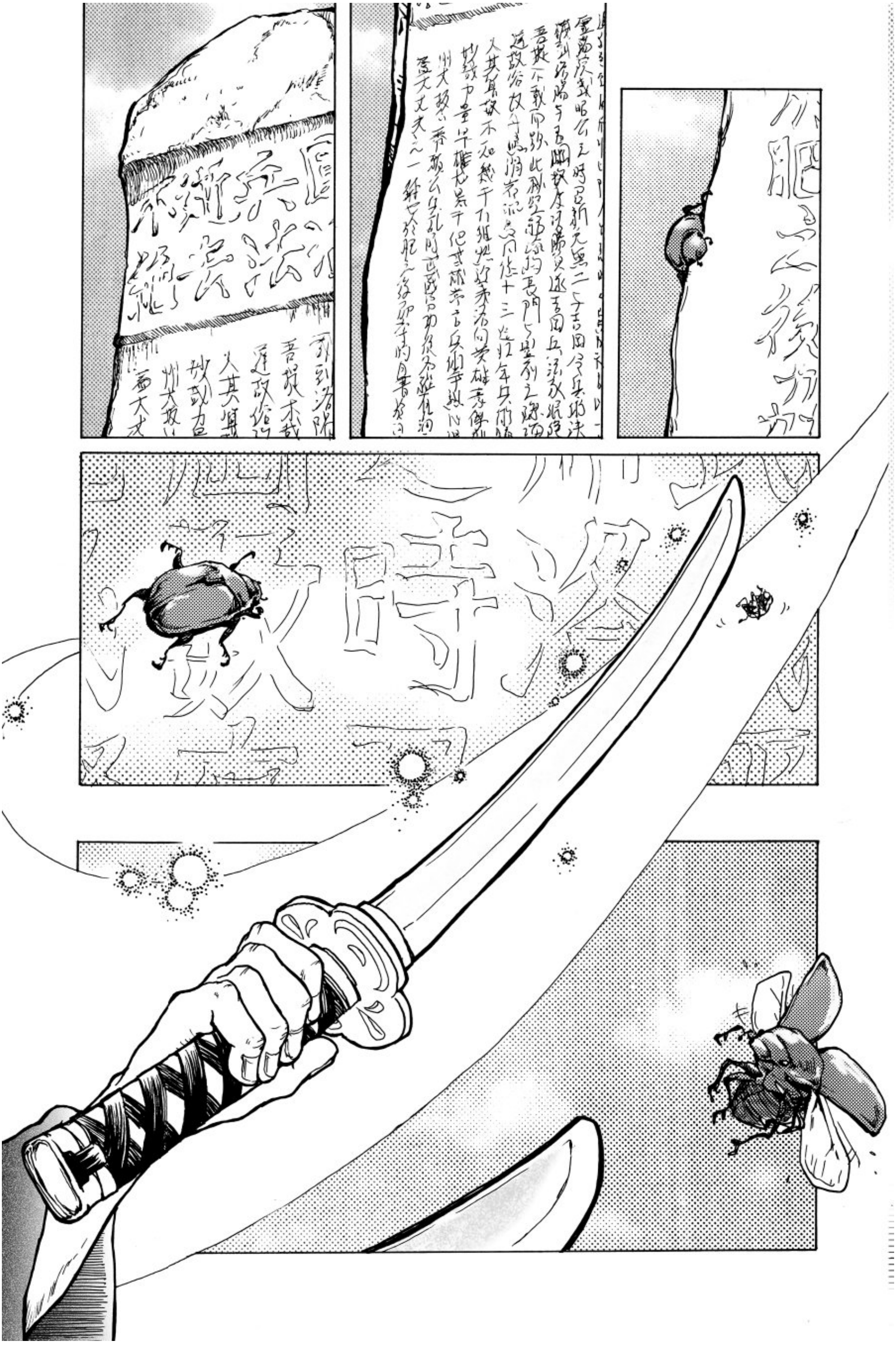
There is a tendency among mature pr to insist that bushido is not about how t can beat up; it's about something Musashi can also be seen as the archet He fought about sixty duels, many of th never defeated. That one point alone is s he lived in and the many swordsmen of style of Musashi is known as ***Ni ten ich*** one" style. This was passed on to some o these pages, and continues, with so practiced today. But later in his life Mus in poetry, calligraphy, painting, tea cere meditation, and he went on to write arts texts, *Go Rin no Sho,* or the "Boo we can say, without a hint of cliché, that was a warrior-poet—

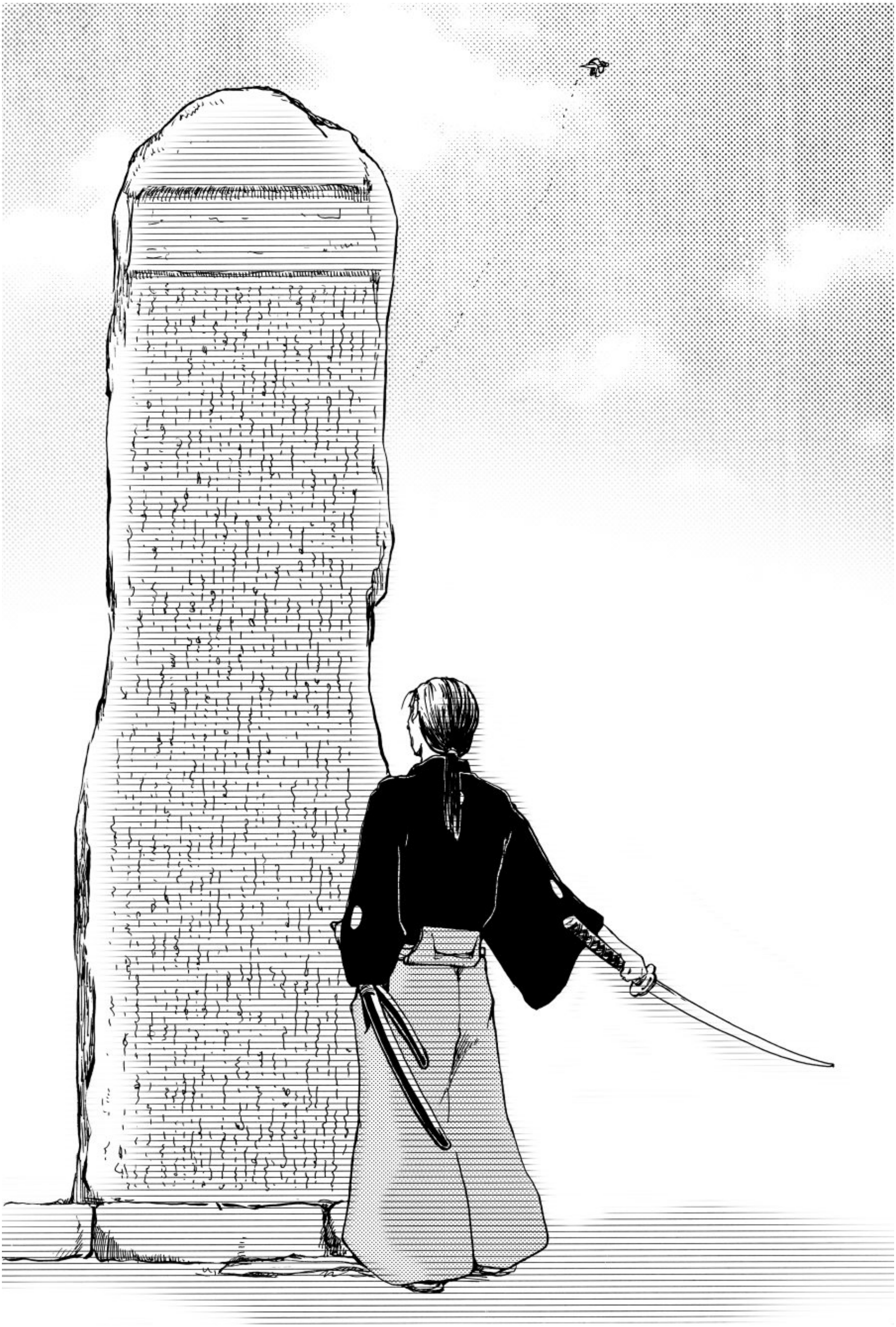
a combination that continues to inspire.

MUSASHI!

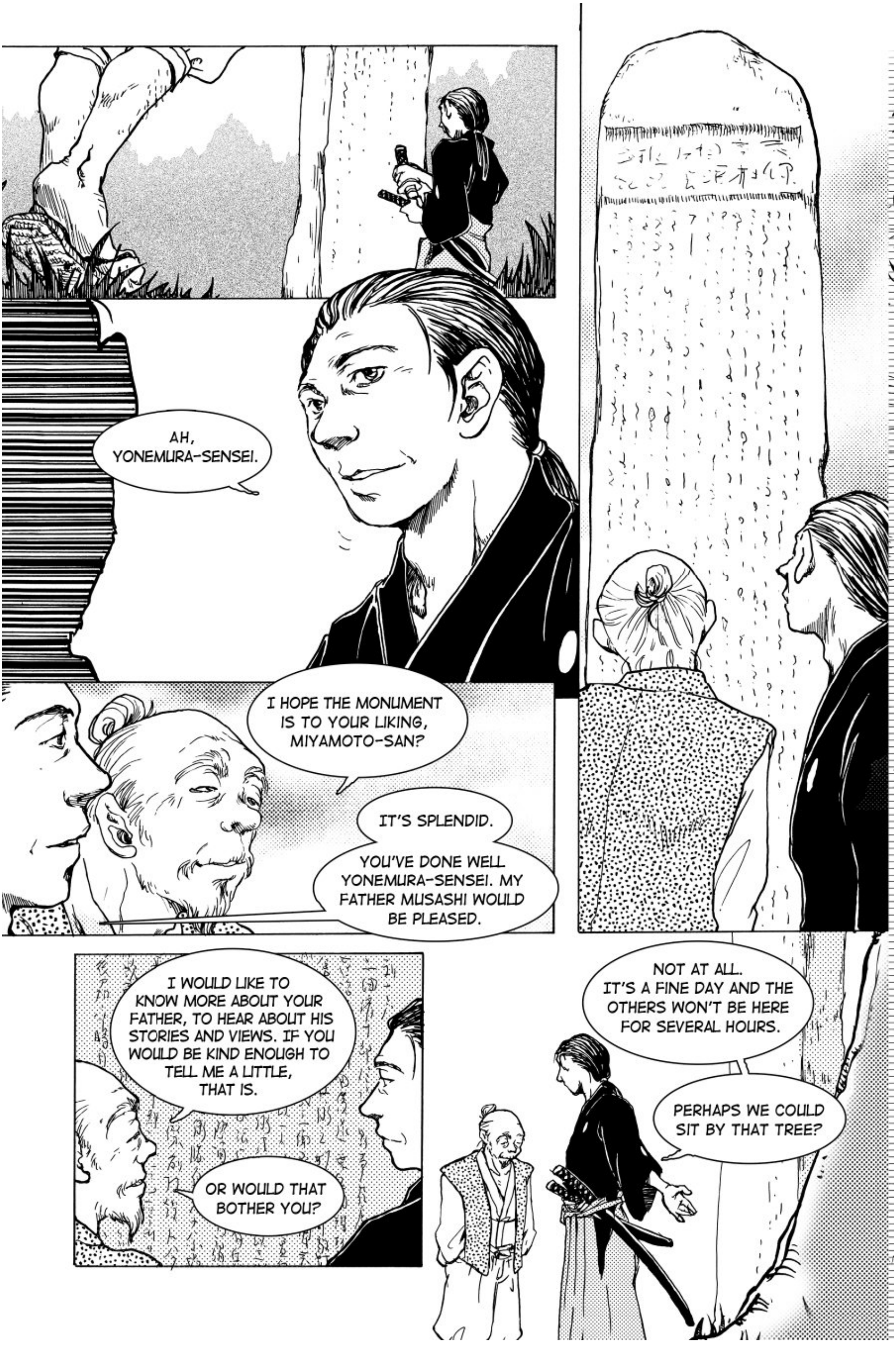
[redacted]

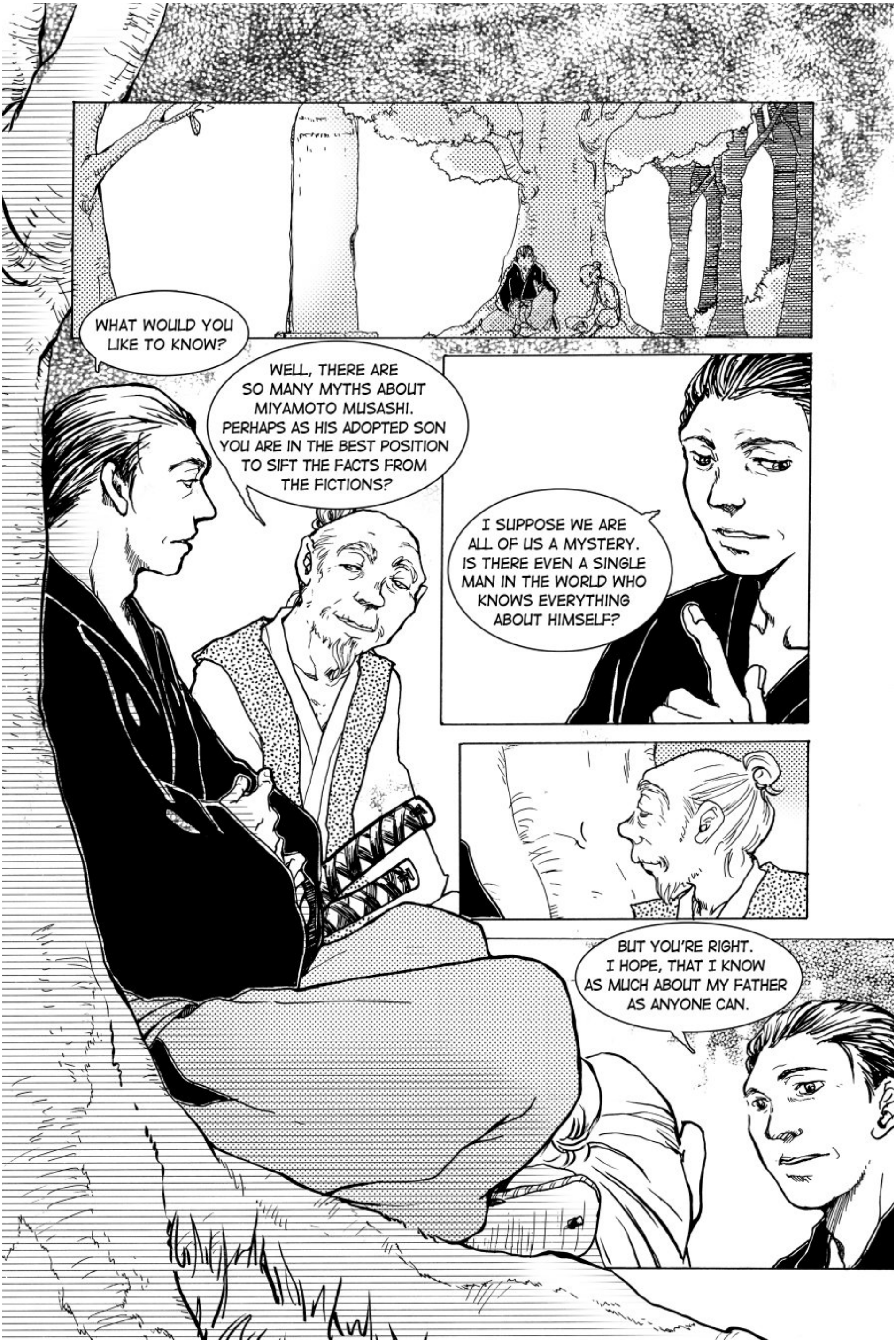


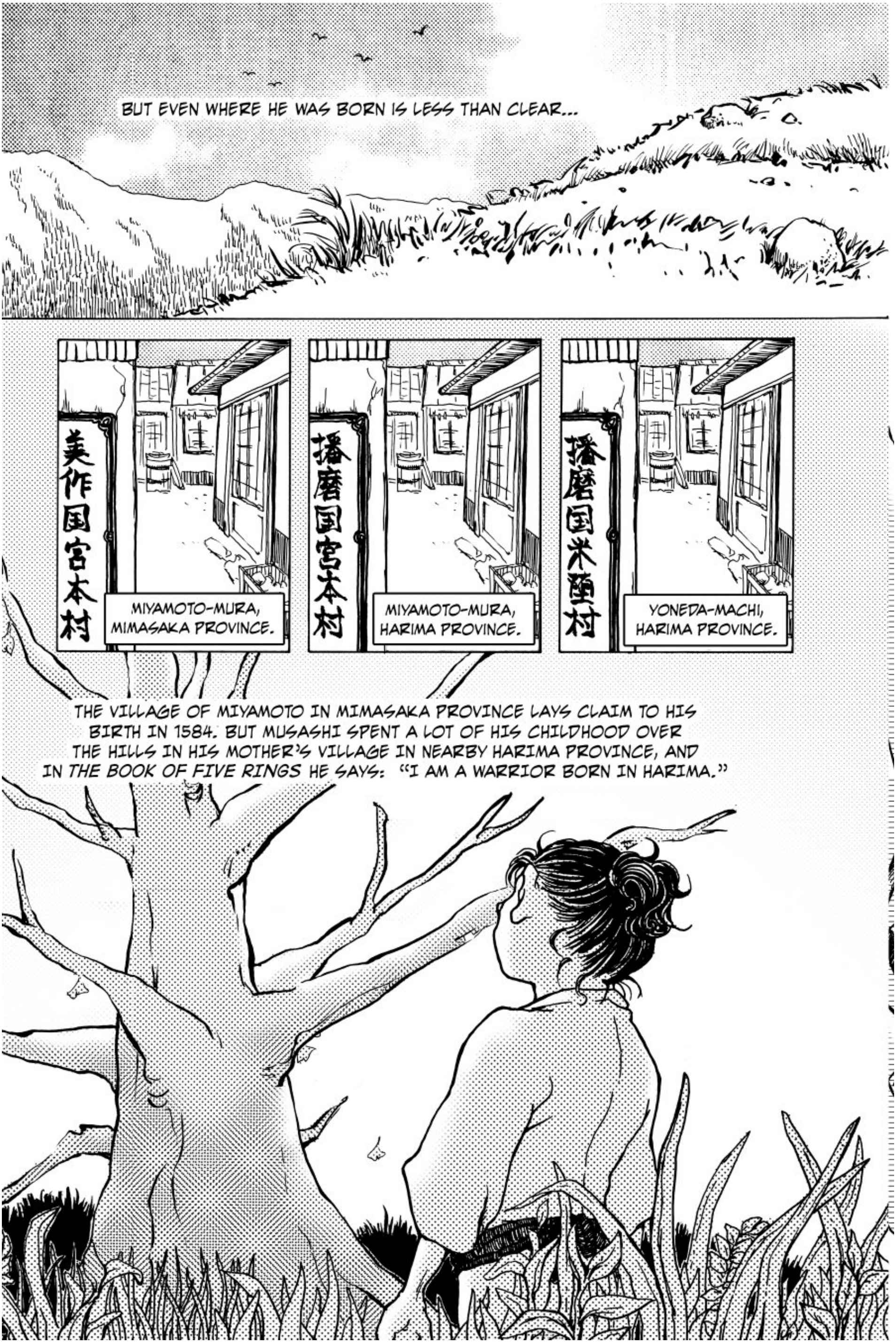


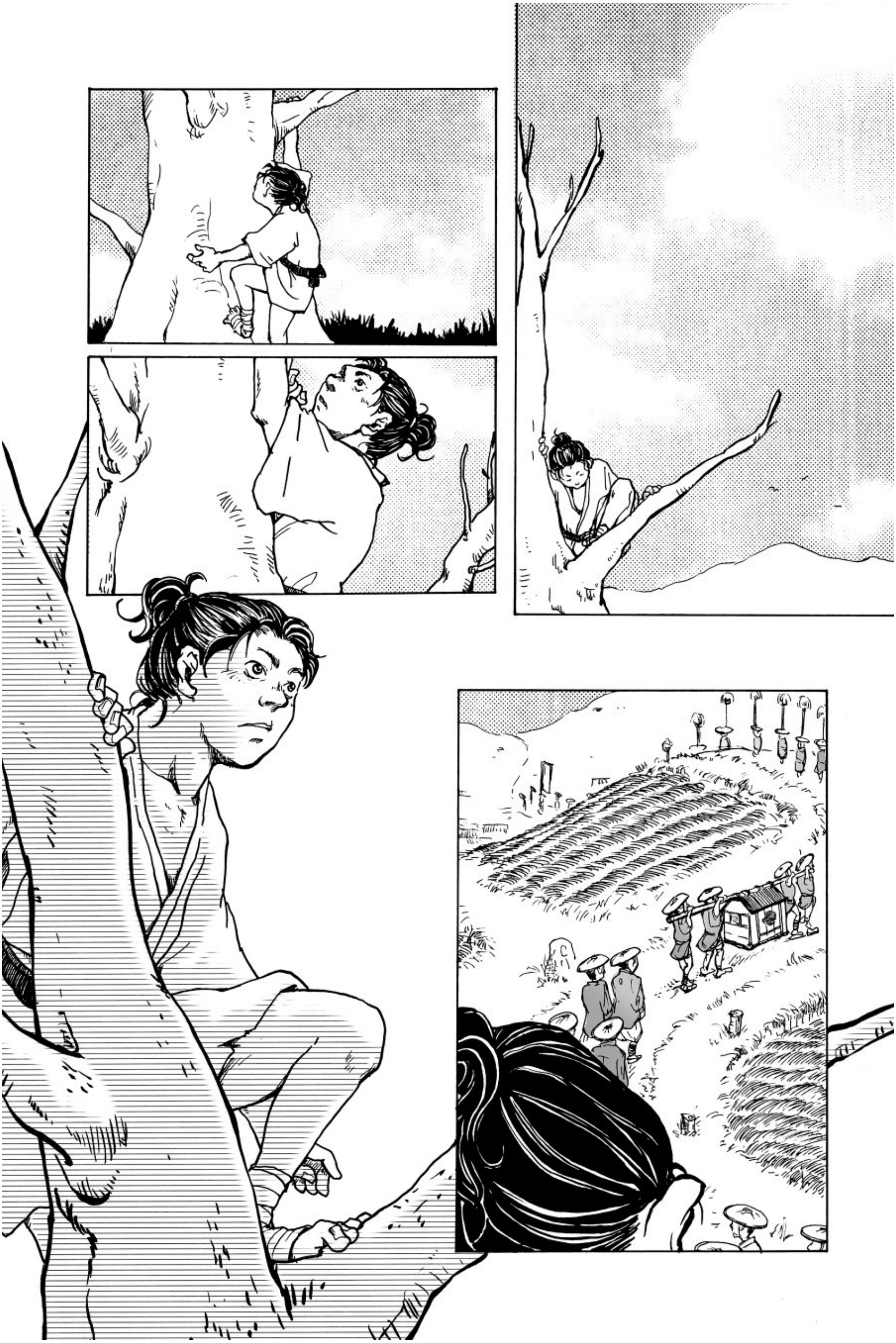


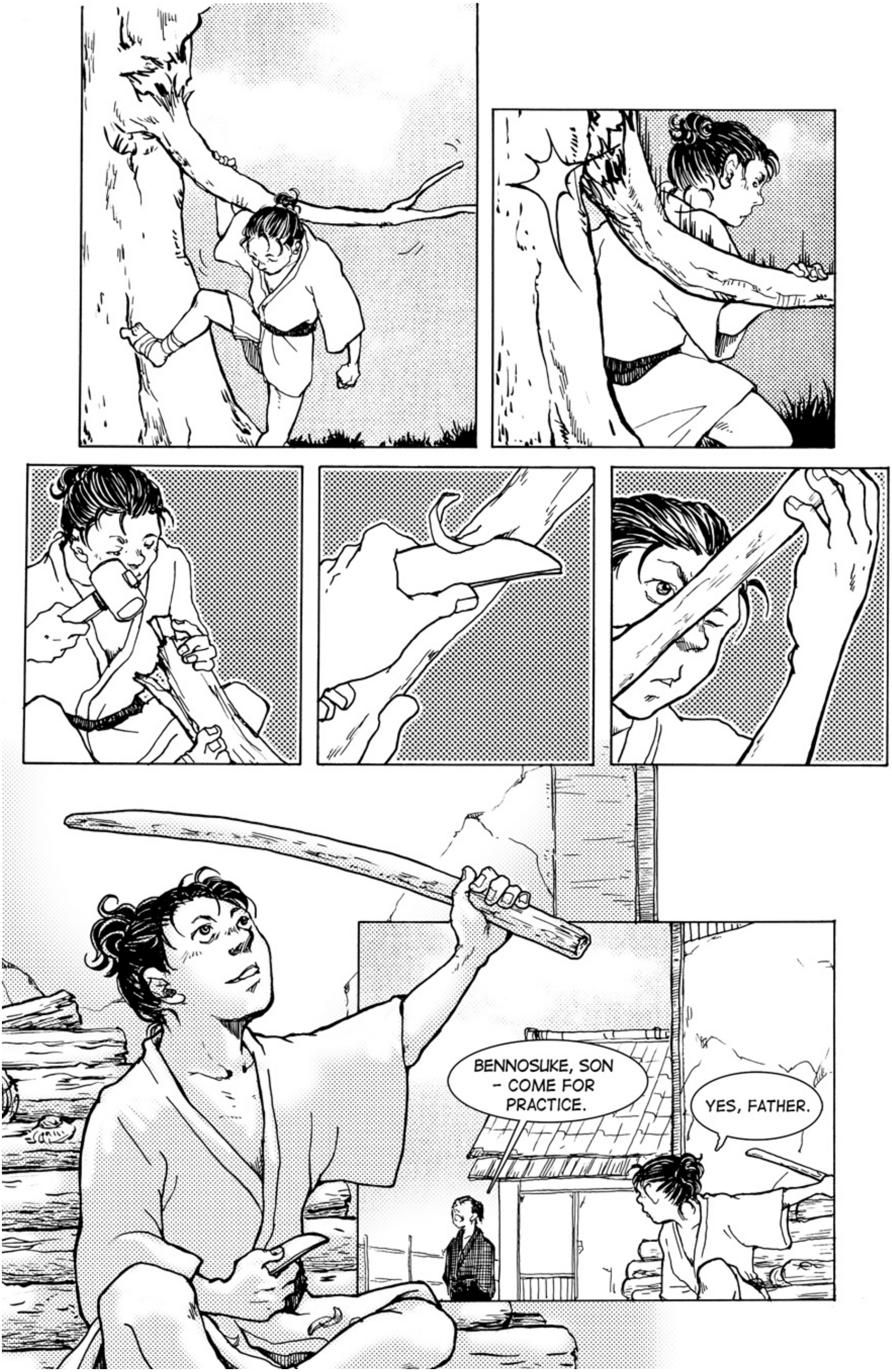
MONUMENT TO MIYAMOTO MUSASHI, ERECTED IN 1654 ON MOUNT TAMUKE, NEAR THE CITY OF KOKURA, BY MUSASHI'S ADOPTED SON, MIYAMOTO IORI.

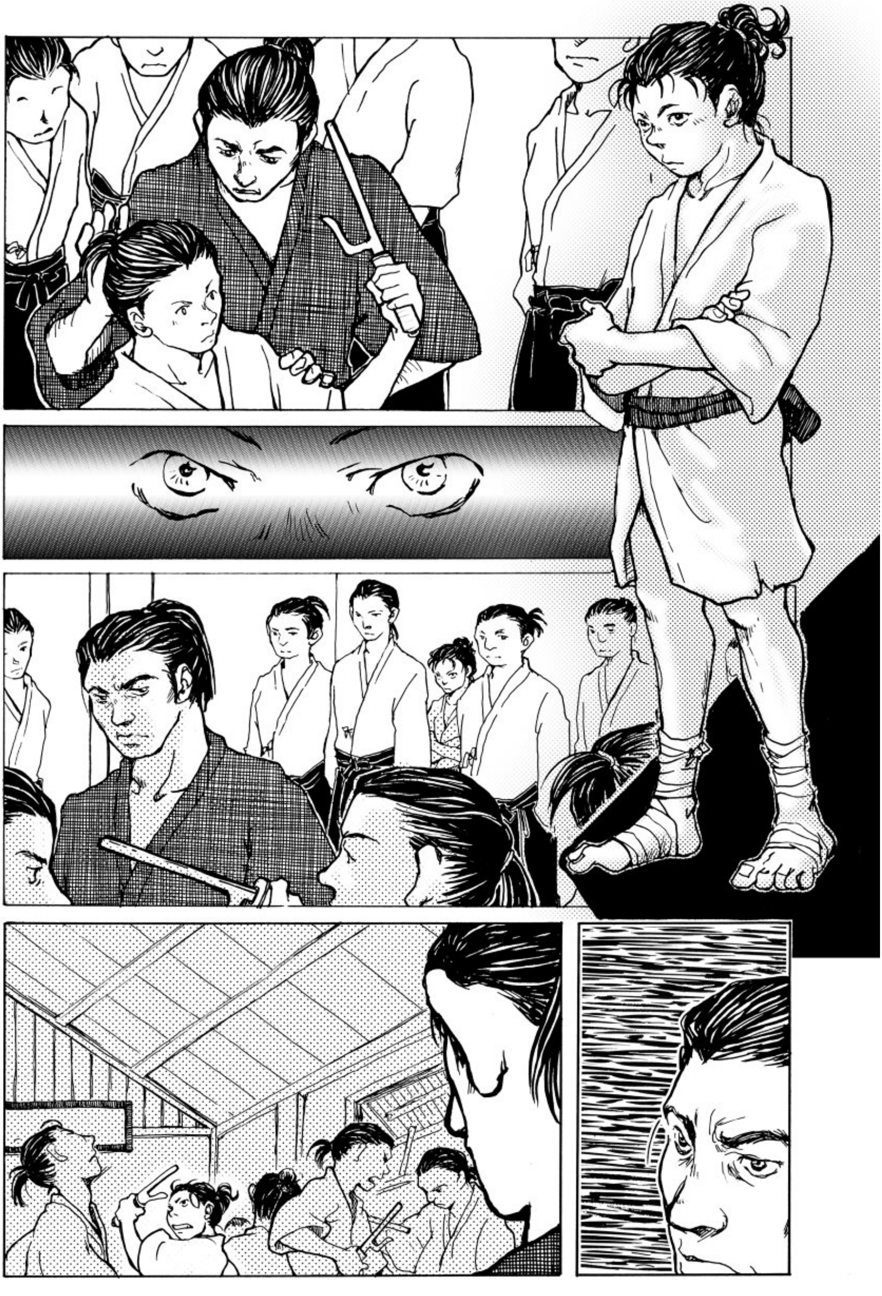

AH, YONEMURA-SENSEI.
I HOPE THE MONUMENT IS TO YOUR LIKING, MIYAMOTO-SAN?
IT'S SPLENDID.
YOU'VE DONE WELL YONEMURA-SENSEI. MY FATHER MUSASHI WOULD BE PLEASED.
I WOULD LIKE TO KNOW MORE ABOUT YOUR FATHER, TO HEAR ABOUT HIS STORIES AND VIEWS. IF YOU WOULD BE KIND ENOUGH TO TELL ME A LITTLE, THAT IS.
OR WOULD THAT BOTHER YOU?
NOT AT ALL. IT'S A FINE DAY AND THE OTHERS WON'T BE HERE FOR SEVERAL HOURS.
PERHAPS WE COULD SIT BY THAT TREE?

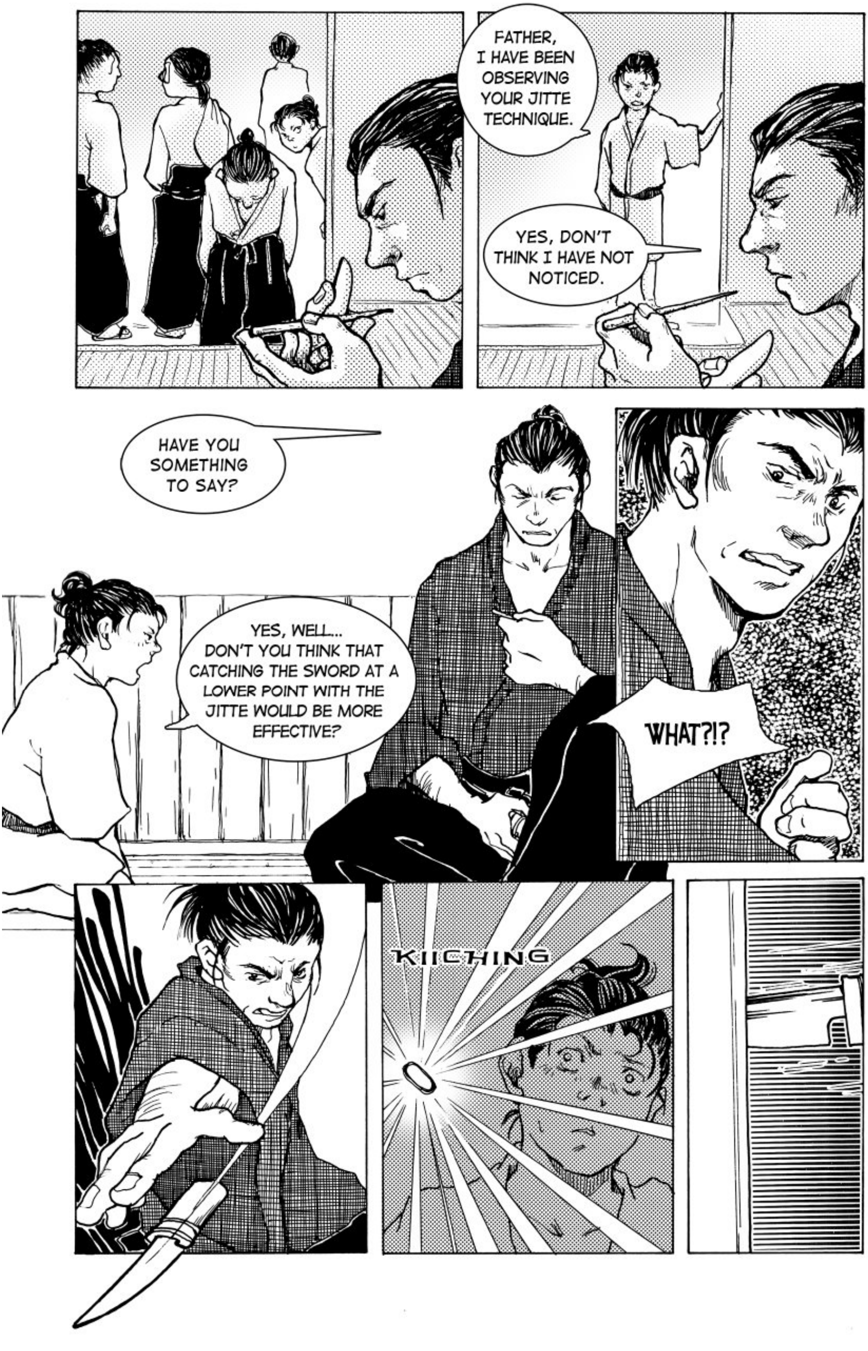

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO KNOW?
WELL, THERE ARE SO MANY MYTHS ABOUT MIYAMOTO MUSASHI. PERHAPS AS HIS ADOPTED SON YOU ARE IN THE BEST POSITION TO SIFT THE FACTS FROM THE FICTIONS?
I SUPPOSE WE ARE ALL OF US A MYSTERY. IS THERE EVEN A SINGLE MAN IN THE WORLD WHO KNOWS EVERYTHING ABOUT HIMSELF?
BUT YOU'RE RIGHT. I HOPE, THAT I KNOW AS MUCH ABOUT MY FATHER AS ANYONE CAN.

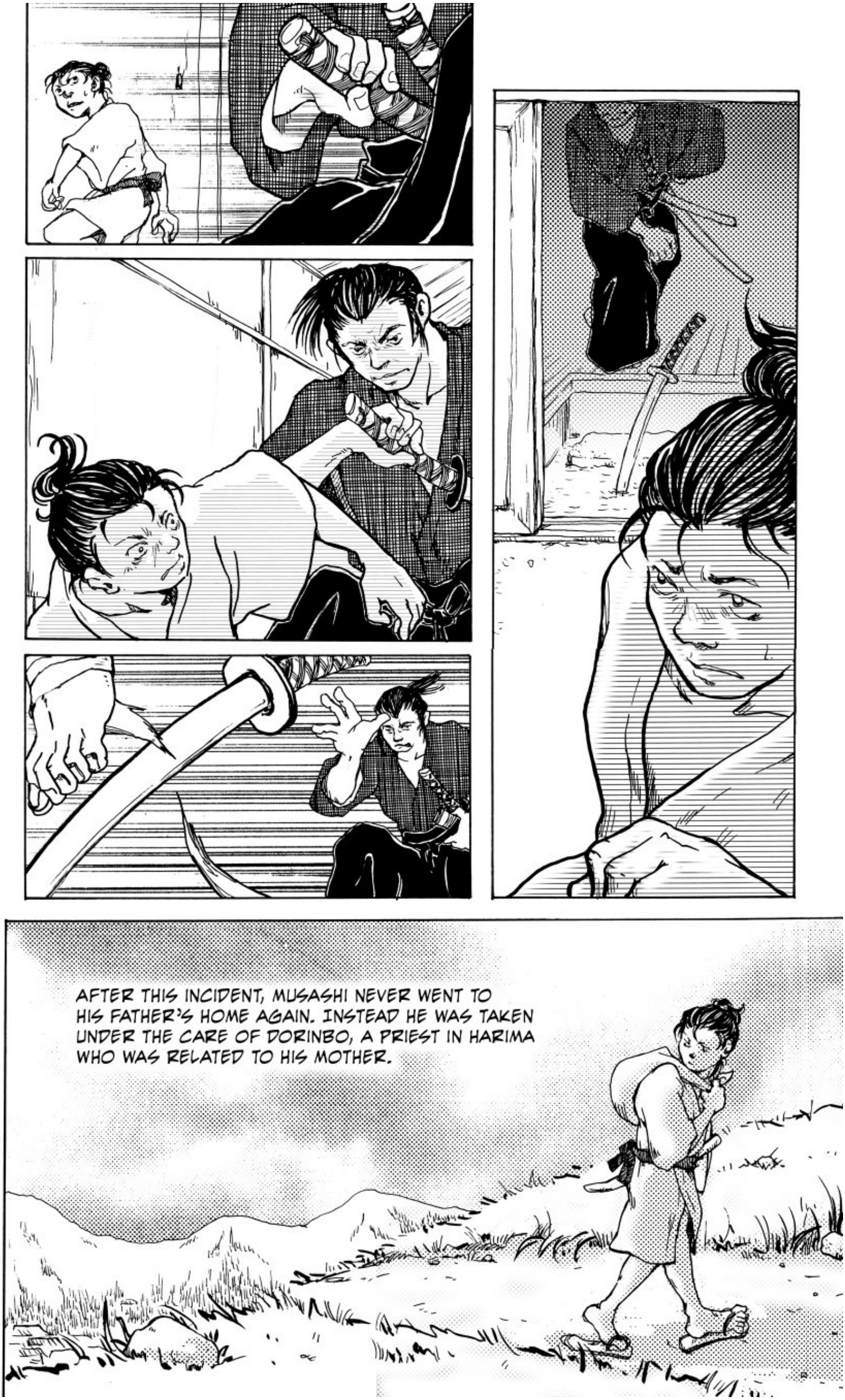

BUT EVEN WHERE HE WAS BORN IS LESS THAN CLEAR...
美作国宮本村
MIYAMOTO-MURA, MIMASAKA PROVINCE.
播磨国宮本村
MIYAMOTO-MURA, HARIMA PROVINCE.
播磨国米堕村
YONEDA-MACHI, HARIMA PROVINCE.
THE VILLAGE OF MIYAMOTO IN MIMASAKA PROVINCE LAYS CLAIM TO HIS BIRTH IN 1584. BUT MUSASHI SPENT A LOT OF HIS CHILDHOOD OVER THE HILLS IN HIS MOTHER'S VILLAGE IN NEARBY HARIMA PROVINCE, AND IN *THE BOOK OF FIVE RINGS* HE SAYS: "I AM A WARRIOR BORN IN HARIMA."

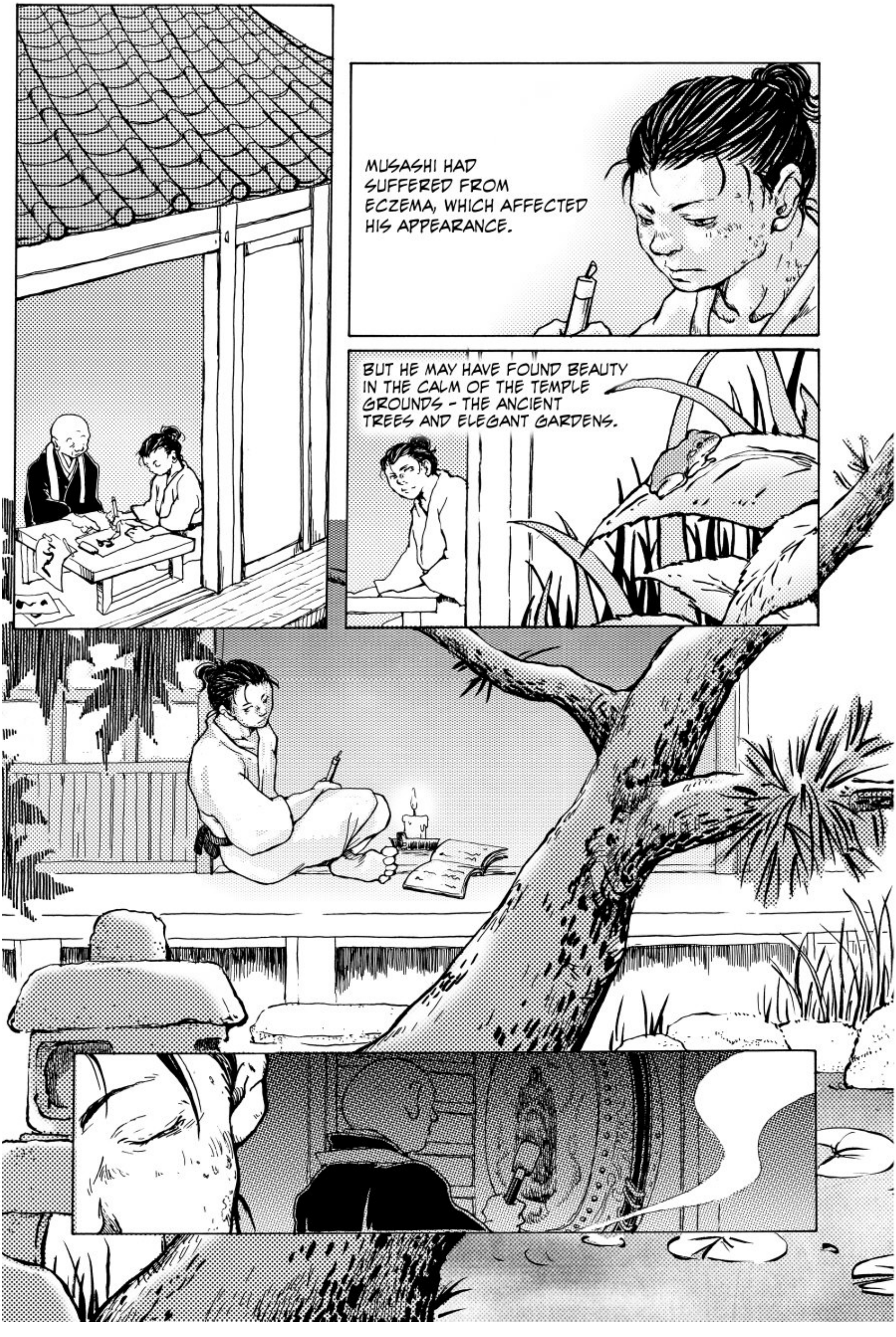


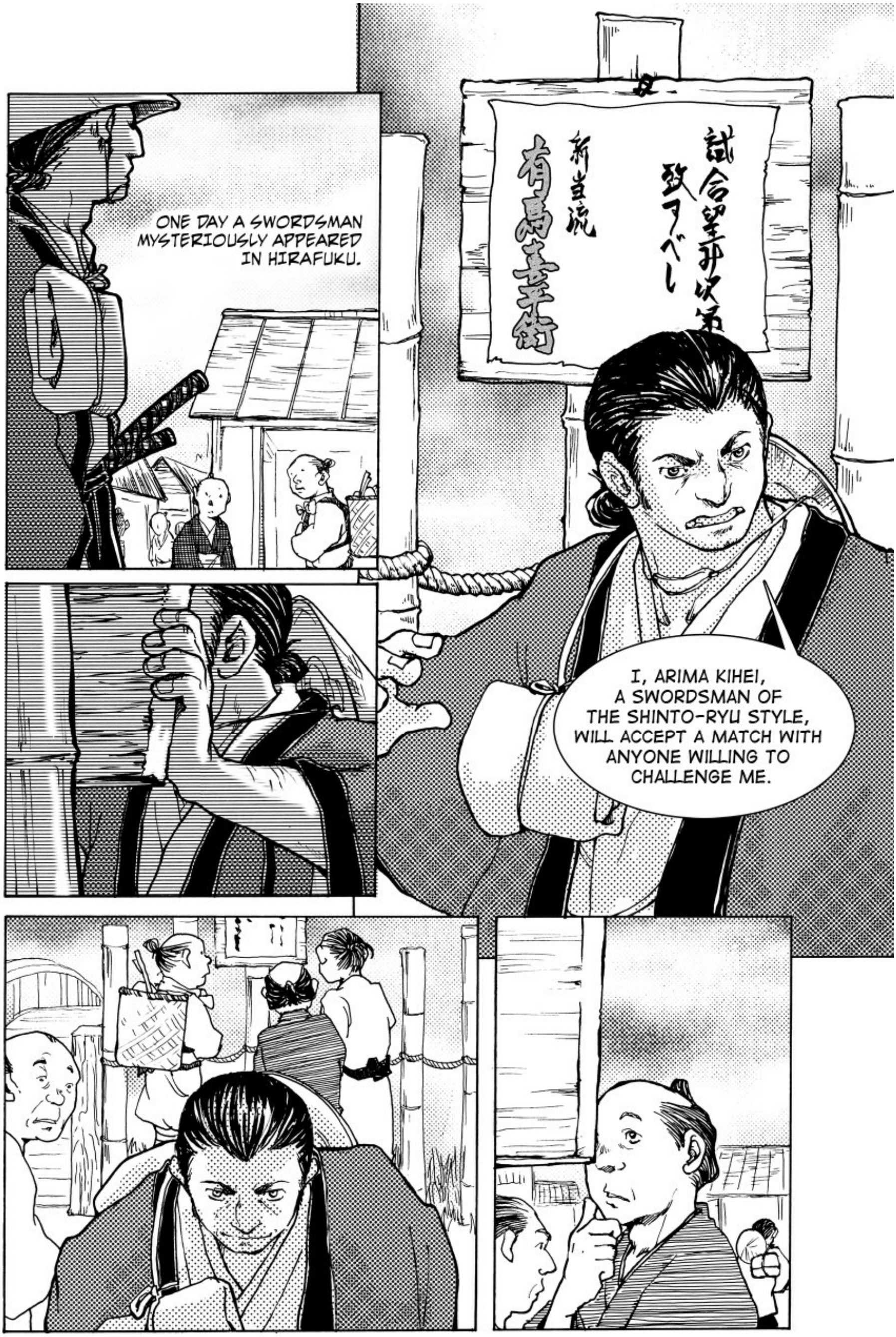

BENNOSUKE, SON - COME FOR PRACTICE.
YES, FATHER.

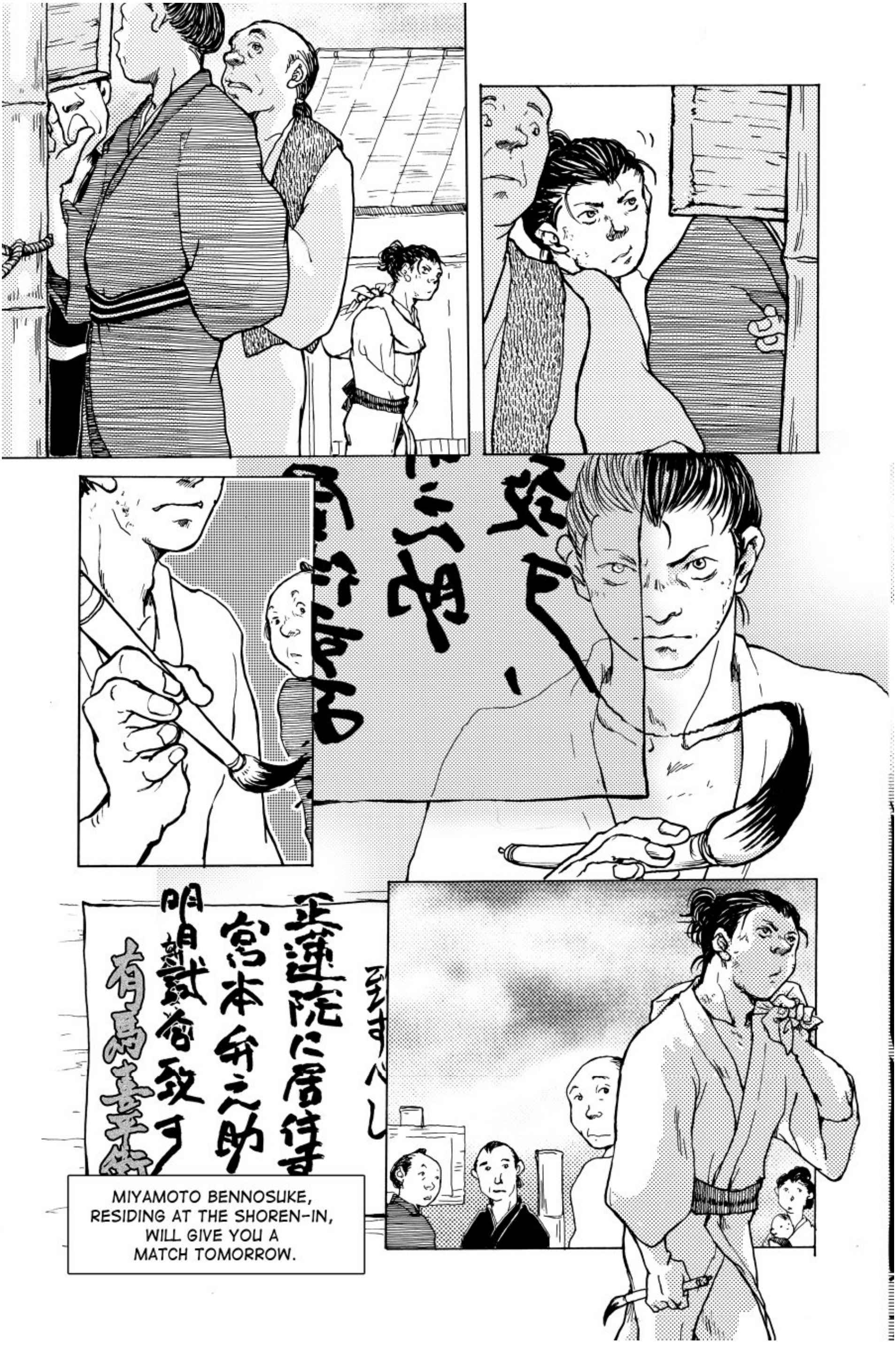


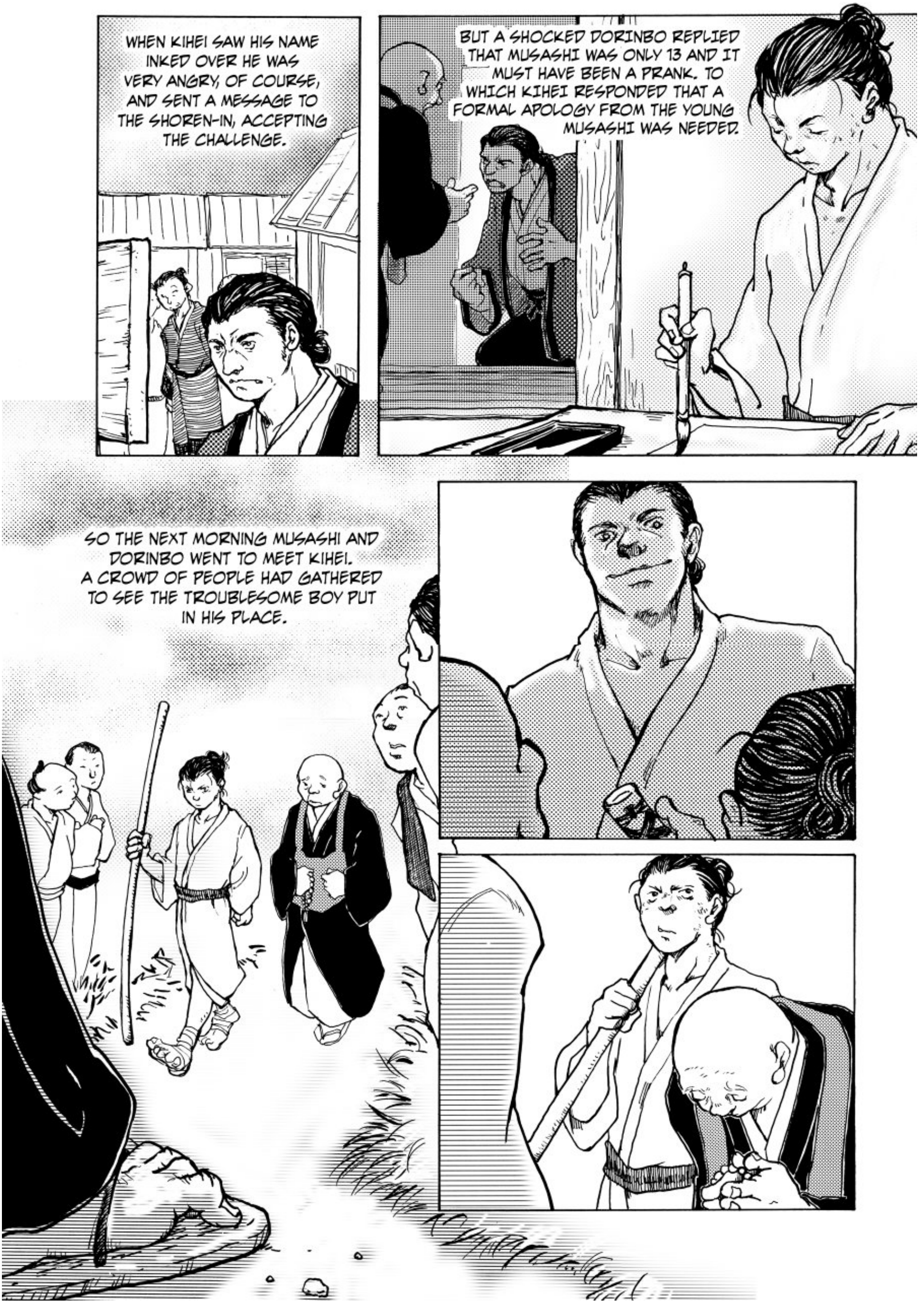

FATHER, I HAVE BEEN OBSERVING YOUR JITTE TECHNIQUE.
YES, DON'T THINK I HAVE NOT NOTICED.
HAVE YOU SOMETHING TO SAY?
YES, WELL... DON'T YOU THINK THAT CATCHING THE SWORD AT A LOWER POINT WITH THE JITTE WOULD BE MORE EFFECTIVE?
WHAT?!?
KIICHING

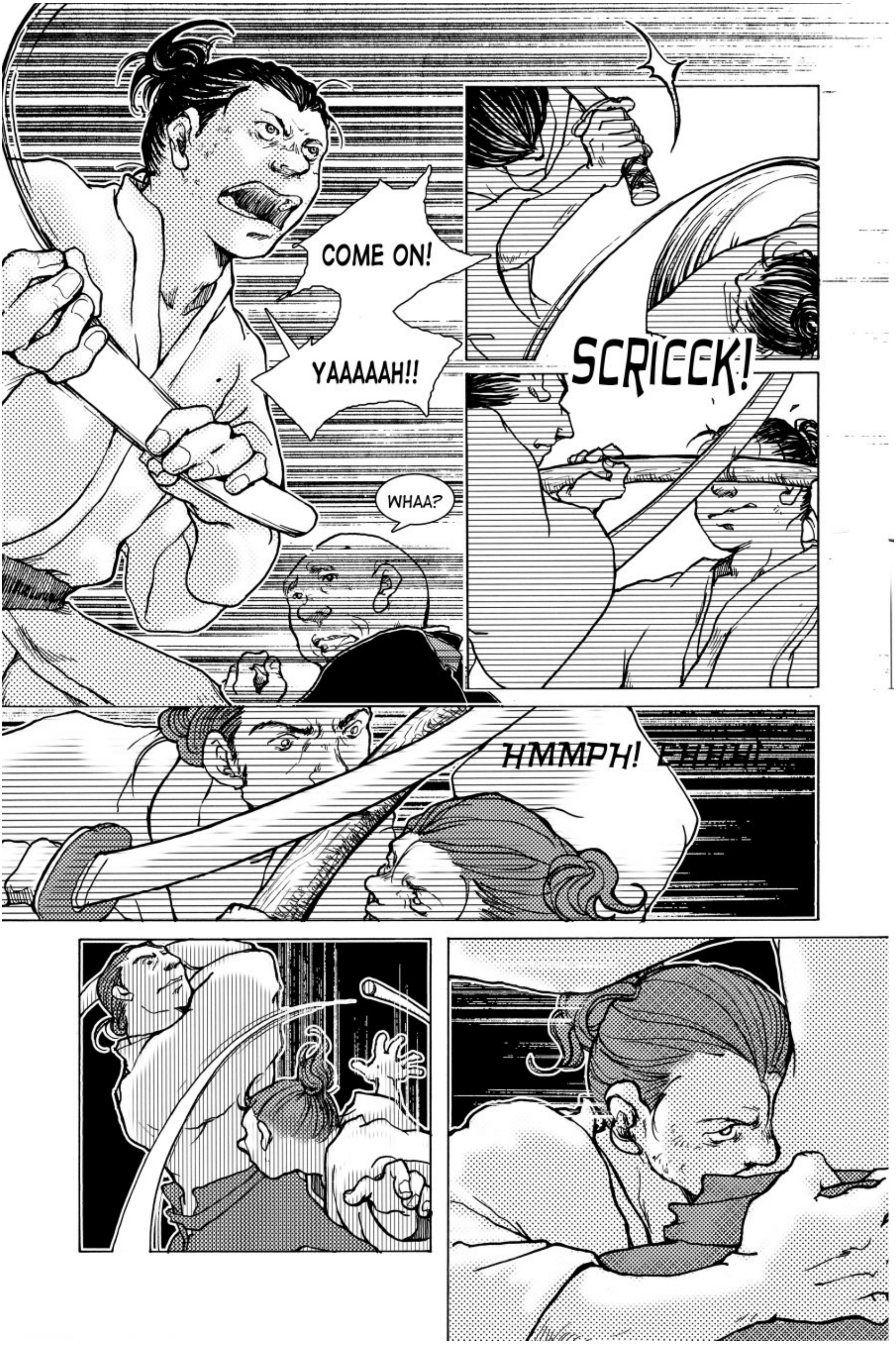

AFTER THIS INCIDENT, MUSASHI NEVER WENT TO HIS FATHER'S HOME AGAIN. INSTEAD HE WAS TAKEN UNDER THE CARE OF DORINBO, A PRIEST IN HARIMA WHO WAS RELATED TO HIS MOTHER.

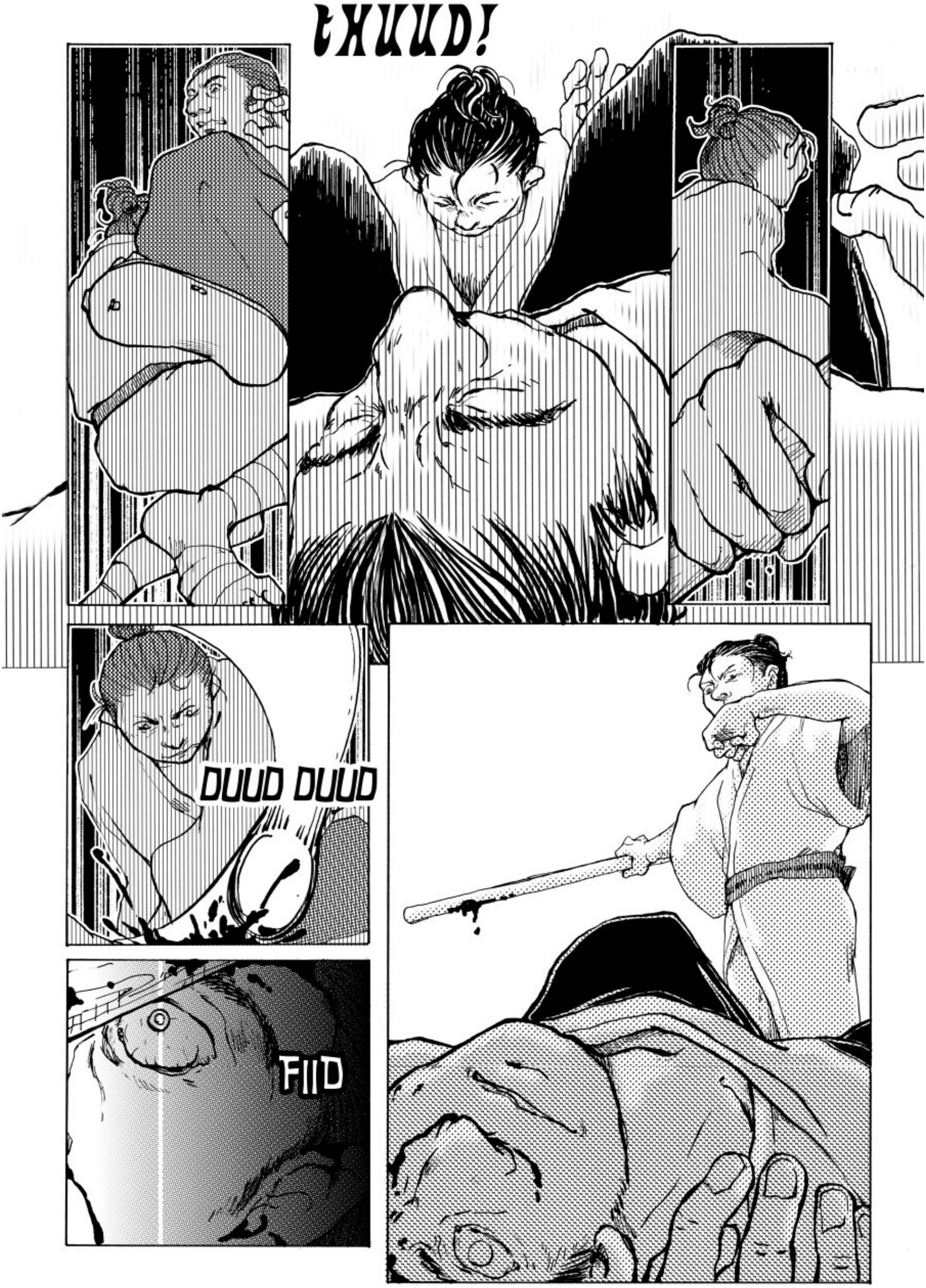

MUSASHI HAD SUFFERED FROM ECZEMA, WHICH AFFECTED HIS APPEARANCE.
BUT HE MAY HAVE FOUND BEAUTY IN THE CALM OF THE TEMPLE GROUNDS - THE ANCIENT TREES AND ELEGANT GARDENS.

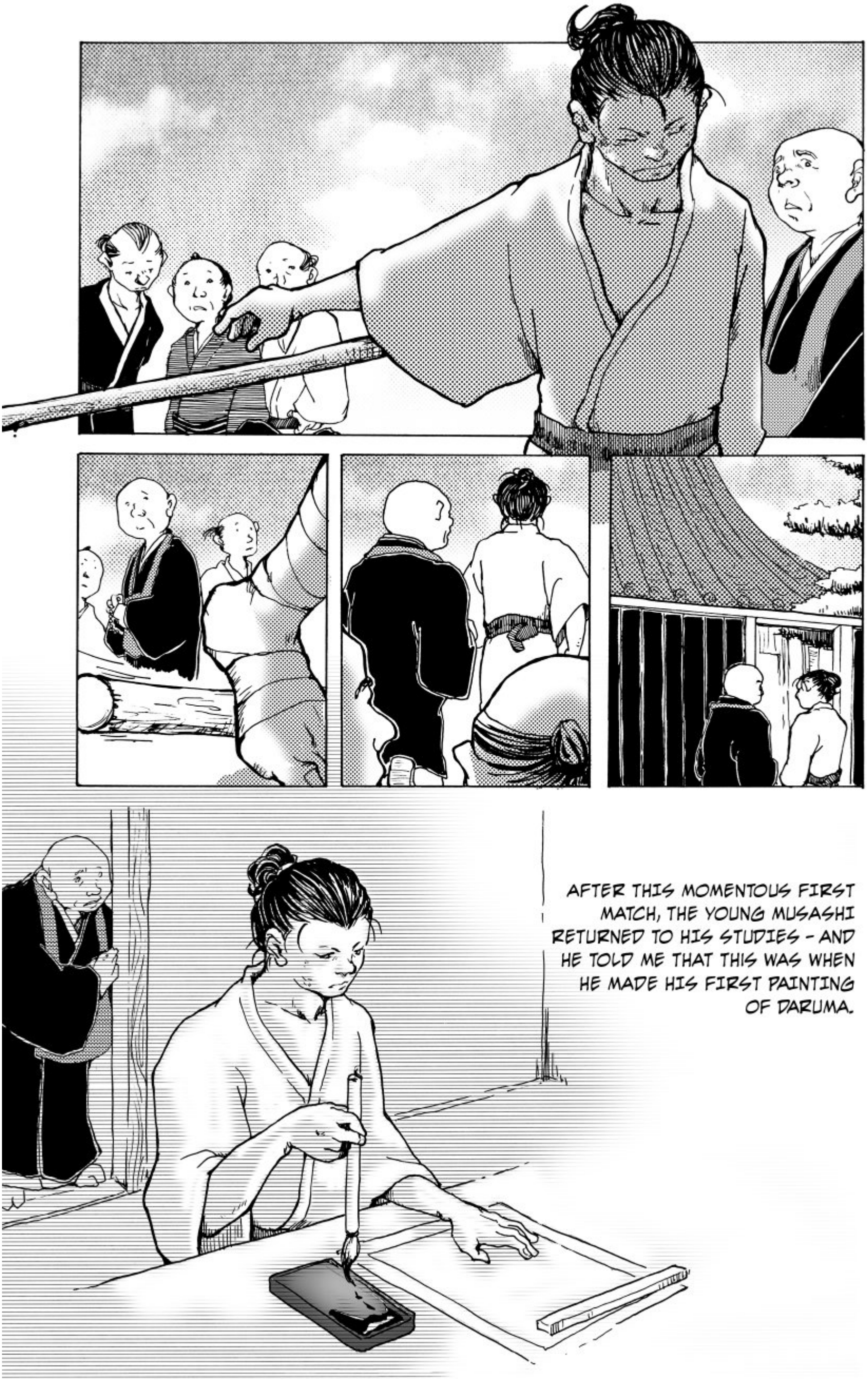

ONE DAY A SWORDSMAN MYSTERIOUSLY APPEARED IN HIRAFUKU.
試合望み次第致ヲべし
新当流
有馬喜平衛
I, ARIMA KIHEI, A SWORDSMAN OF THE SHINTO-RYU STYLE, WILL ACCEPT A MATCH WITH ANYONE WILLING TO CHALLENGE ME.

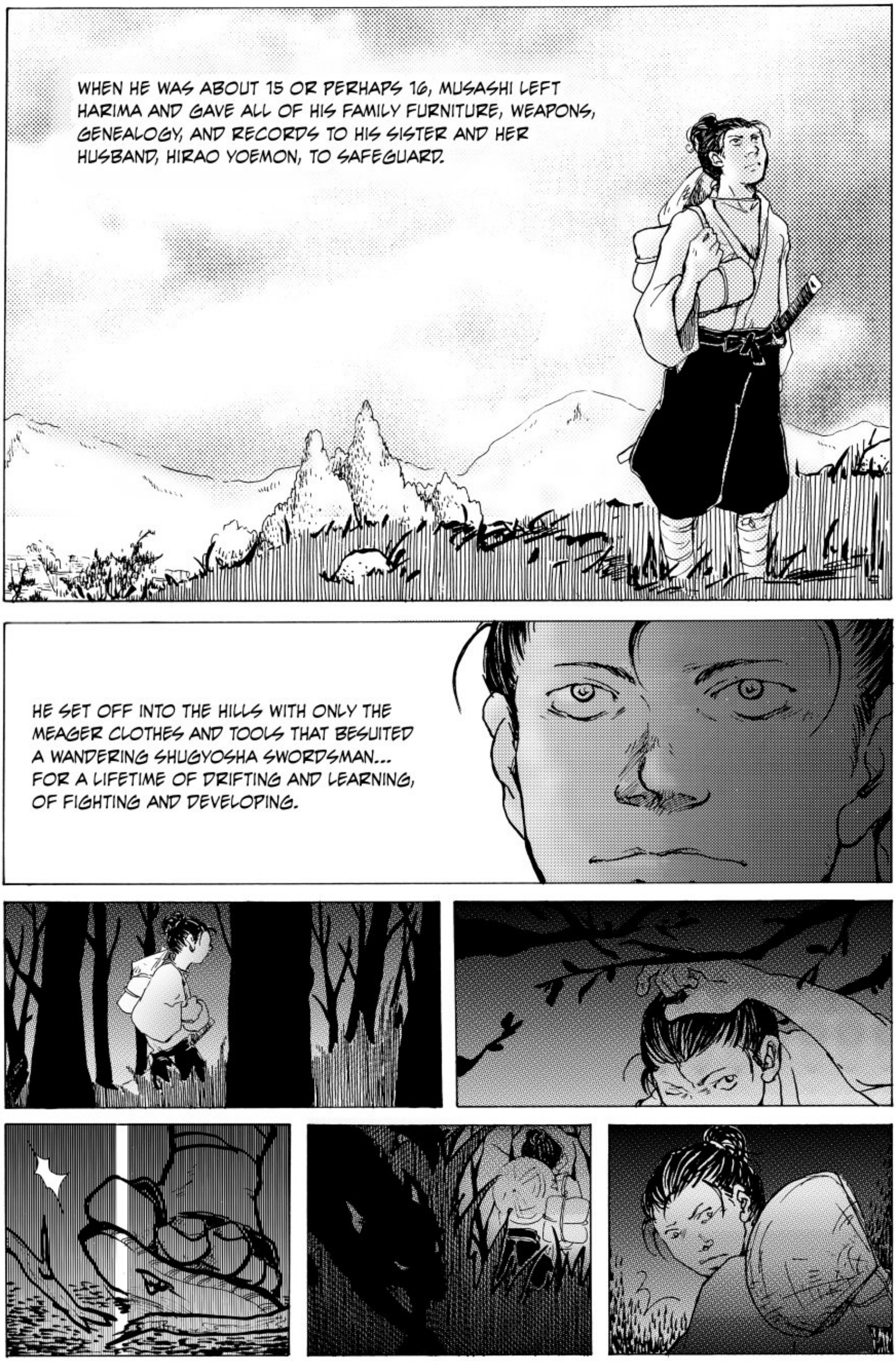

致すべし
正蓮院に居住ま
宮本弁之助
明朝試合致す
有馬喜兵衛
MIYAMOTO BENNOSUKE, RESIDING AT THE SHOREN-IN, WILL GIVE YOU A MATCH TOMORROW.

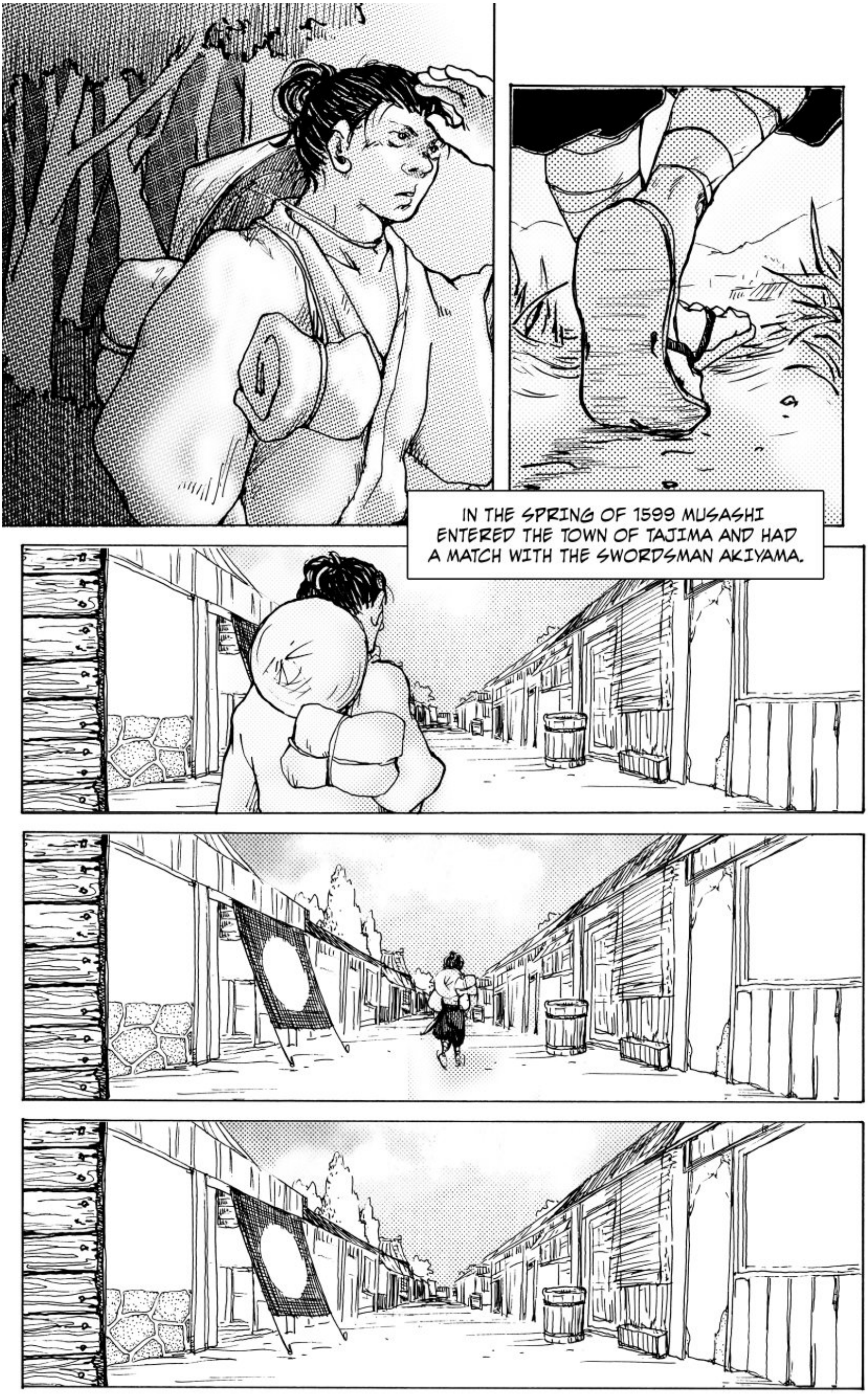

WHEN KIHEI SAW HIS NAME INKED OVER HE WAS VERY ANGRY, OF COURSE, AND SENT A MESSAGE TO THE SHOREN-IN, ACCEPTING THE CHALLENGE.
BUT A SHOCKED DORINBO REPLIED THAT MUSASHI WAS ONLY 13 AND IT MUST HAVE BEEN A PRANK. TO WHICH KIHEI RESPONDED THAT A FORMAL APOLOGY FROM THE YOUNG MUSASHI WAS NEEDED.
SO THE NEXT MORNING MUSASHI AND DORINBO WENT TO MEET KIHEI. A CROWD OF PEOPLE HAD GATHERED TO SEE THE TROUBLESOME BOY PUT IN HIS PLACE.

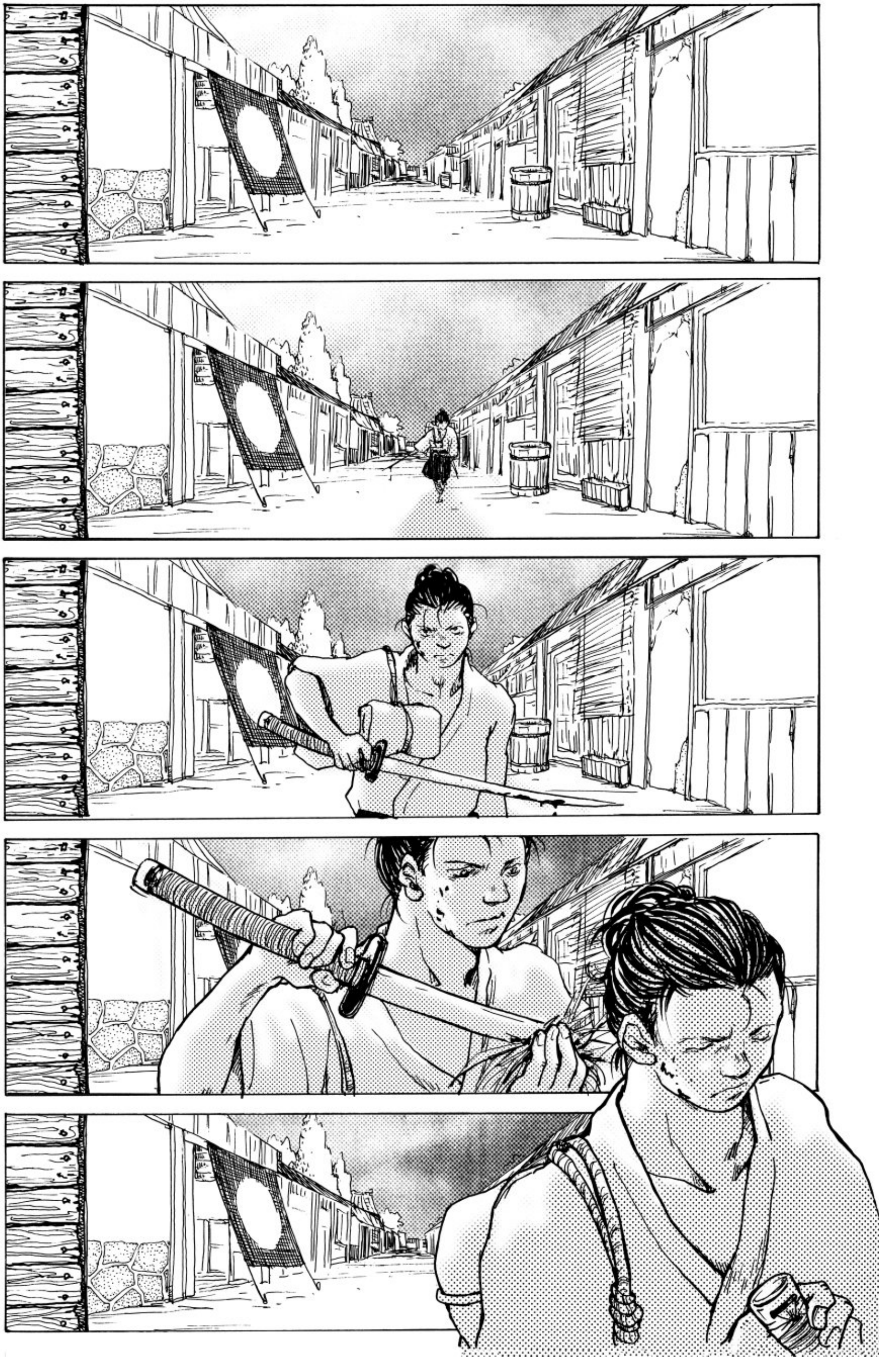

COME ON!
YAAAAAH!!
WHAA?
SCRICCK!
HMMPH! EHHH!

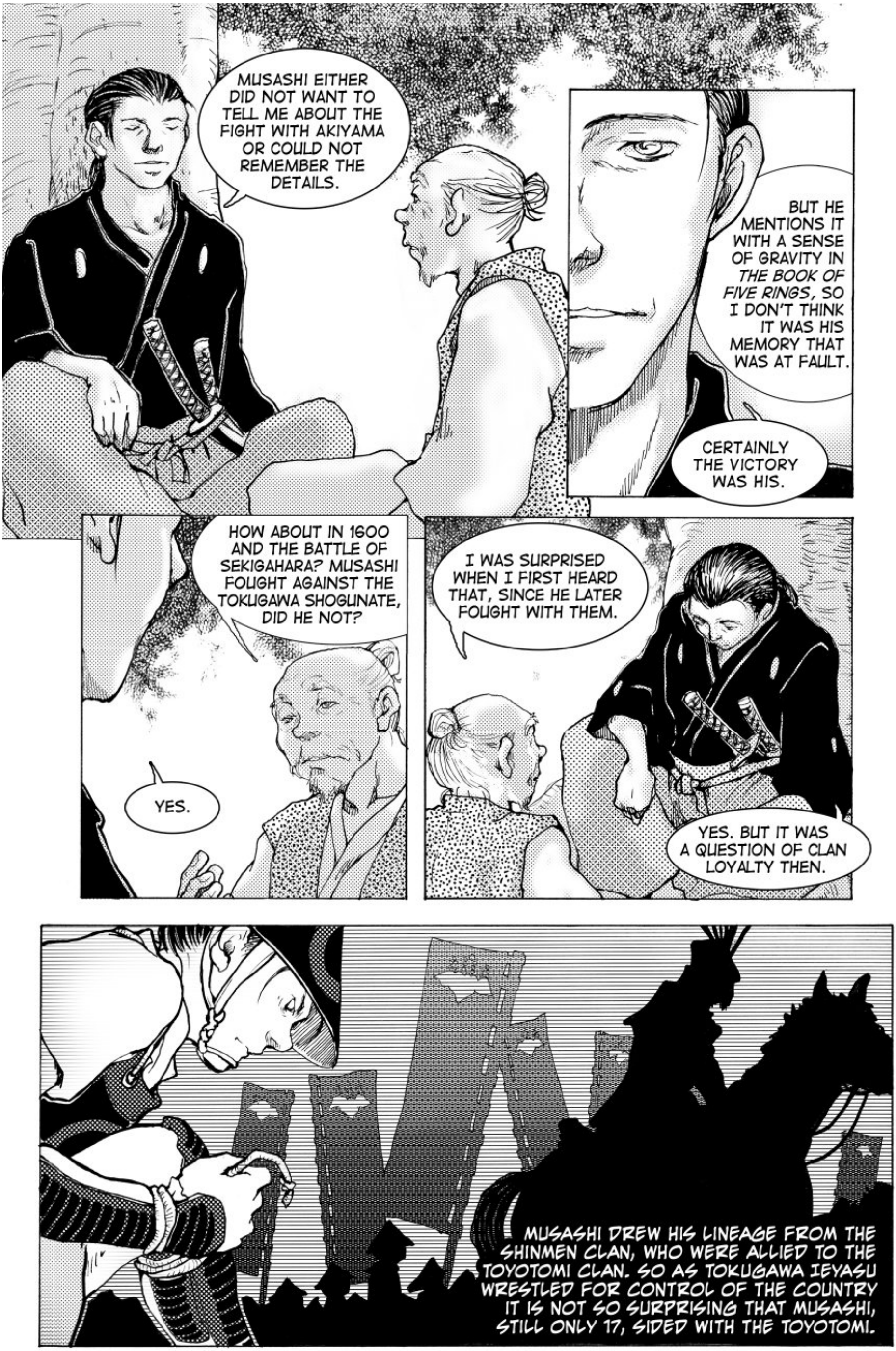

THUUD!
DUUD DUUD
FIID

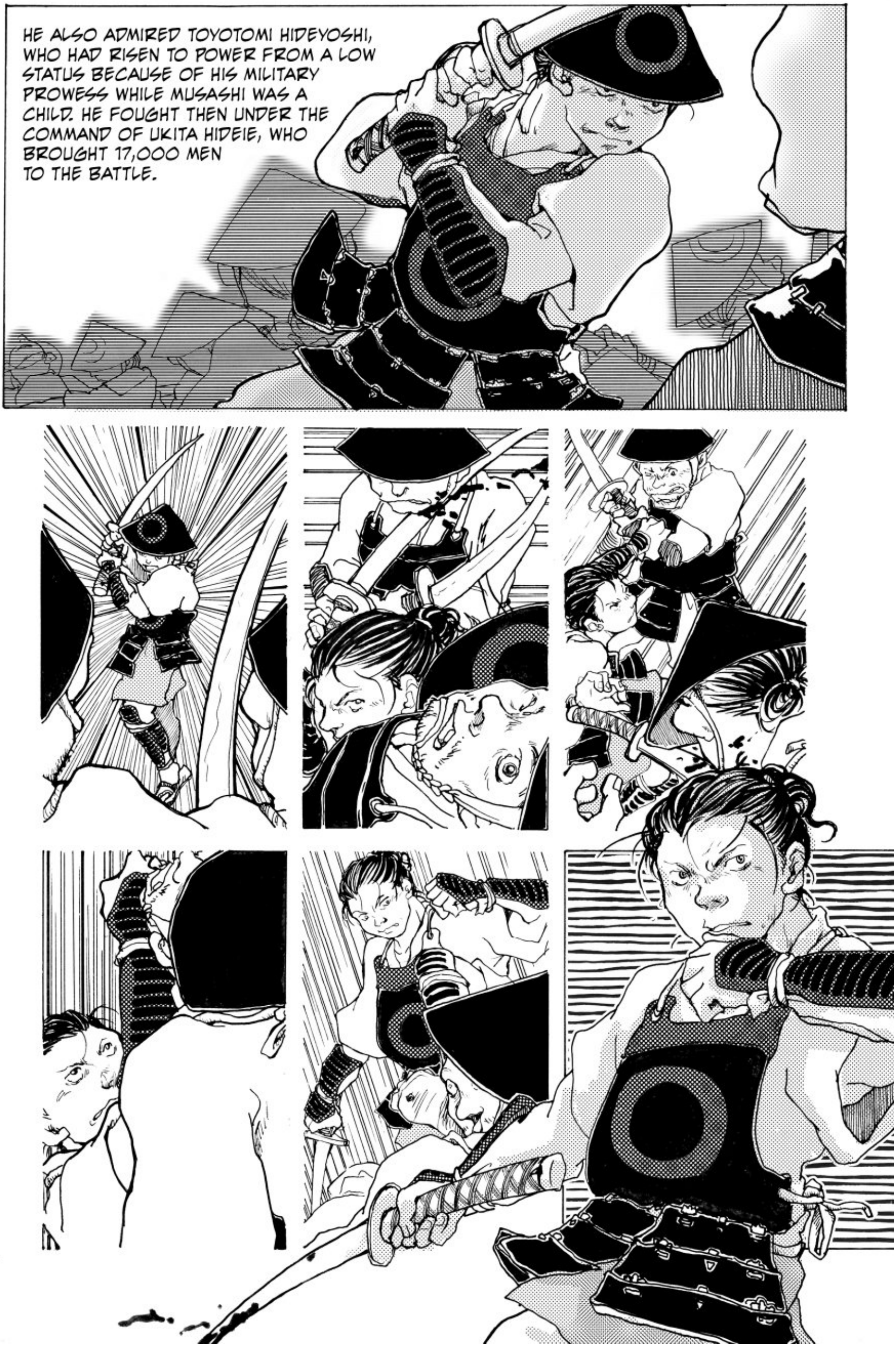

AFTER THIS MOMENTOUS FIRST MATCH, THE YOUNG MUSASHI RETURNED TO HIS STUDIES - AND HE TOLD ME THAT THIS WAS WHEN HE MADE HIS FIRST PAINTING OF DARUMA.

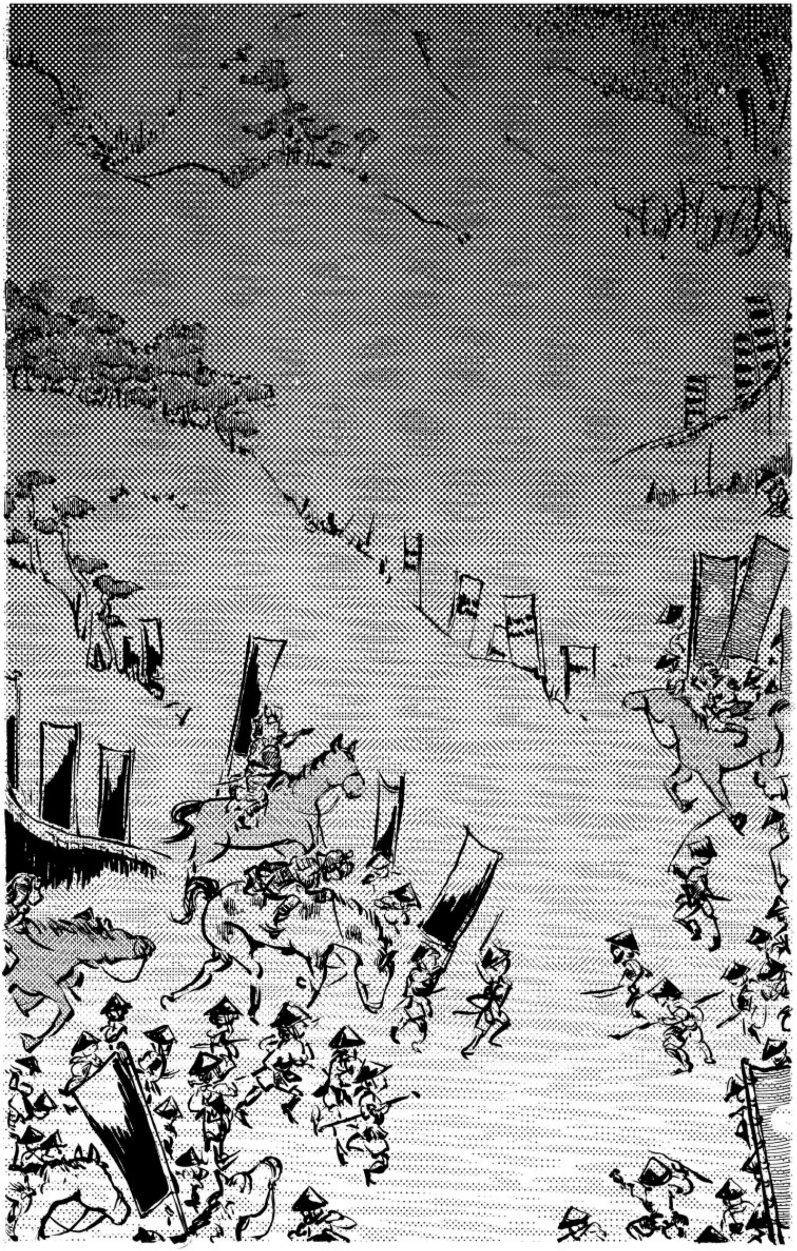

WHEN HE WAS ABOUT 15 OR PERHAPS 16, MUSASHI LEFT HARIMA AND GAVE ALL OF HIS FAMILY FURNITURE, WEAPONS, GENEALOGY, AND RECORDS TO HIS SISTER AND HER HUSBAND, HIRAO YOEMON, TO SAFEGUARD.
HE SET OFF INTO THE HILLS WITH ONLY THE MEAGER CLOTHES AND TOOLS THAT BESUITED A WANDERING SHUGYOSHA SWORDSMAN... FOR A LIFETIME OF DRIFTING AND LEARNING, OF FIGHTING AND DEVELOPING.

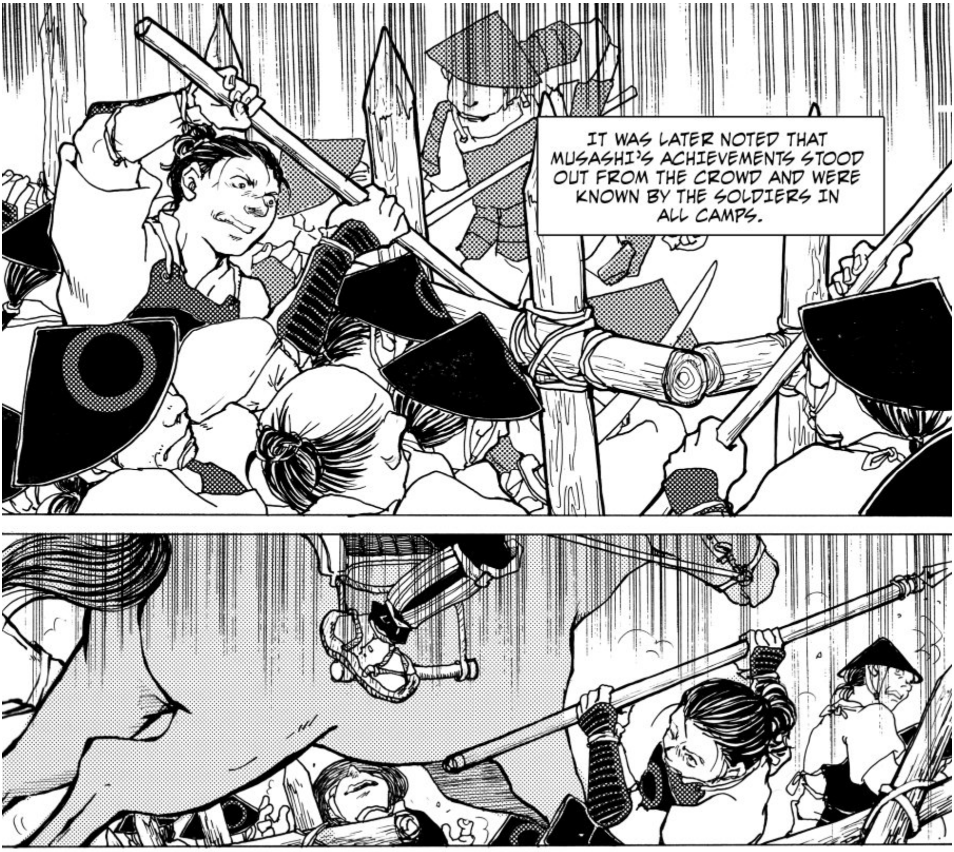

IN THE SPRING OF 1599 MUSASHI ENTERED THE TOWN OF TAJIMA AND HAD A MATCH WITH THE SWORDSMAN AKIYAMA.



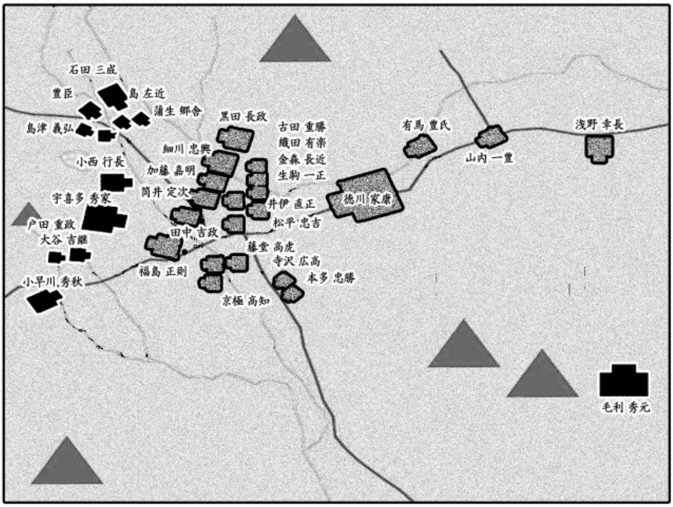

MUSASHI EITHER DID NOT WANT TO TELL ME ABOUT THE FIGHT WITH AKIYAMA OR COULD NOT REMEMBER THE DETAILS.
BUT HE MENTIONS IT WITH A SENSE OF GRAVITY IN *THE BOOK OF FIVE RINGS*, SO I DON'T THINK IT WAS HIS MEMORY THAT WAS AT FAULT.
CERTAINLY THE VICTORY WAS HIS.
HOW ABOUT IN 1600 AND THE BATTLE OF SEKIGAHARA? MUSASHI FOUGHT AGAINST THE TOKUGAWA SHOGUNATE, DID HE NOT?
YES.
I WAS SURPRISED WHEN I FIRST HEARD THAT, SINCE HE LATER FOUGHT WITH THEM.
YES. BUT IT WAS A QUESTION OF CLAN LOYALTY THEN.
MUSASHI DREW HIS LINEAGE FROM THE SHINMEN CLAN, WHO WERE ALLIED TO THE TOYOTOMI CLAN. SO AS TOKUGAWA IEYASU WRESTLED FOR CONTROL OF THE COUNTRY IT IS NOT SO SURPRISING THAT MUSASHI, STILL ONLY 17, SIDED WITH THE TOYOTOMI.

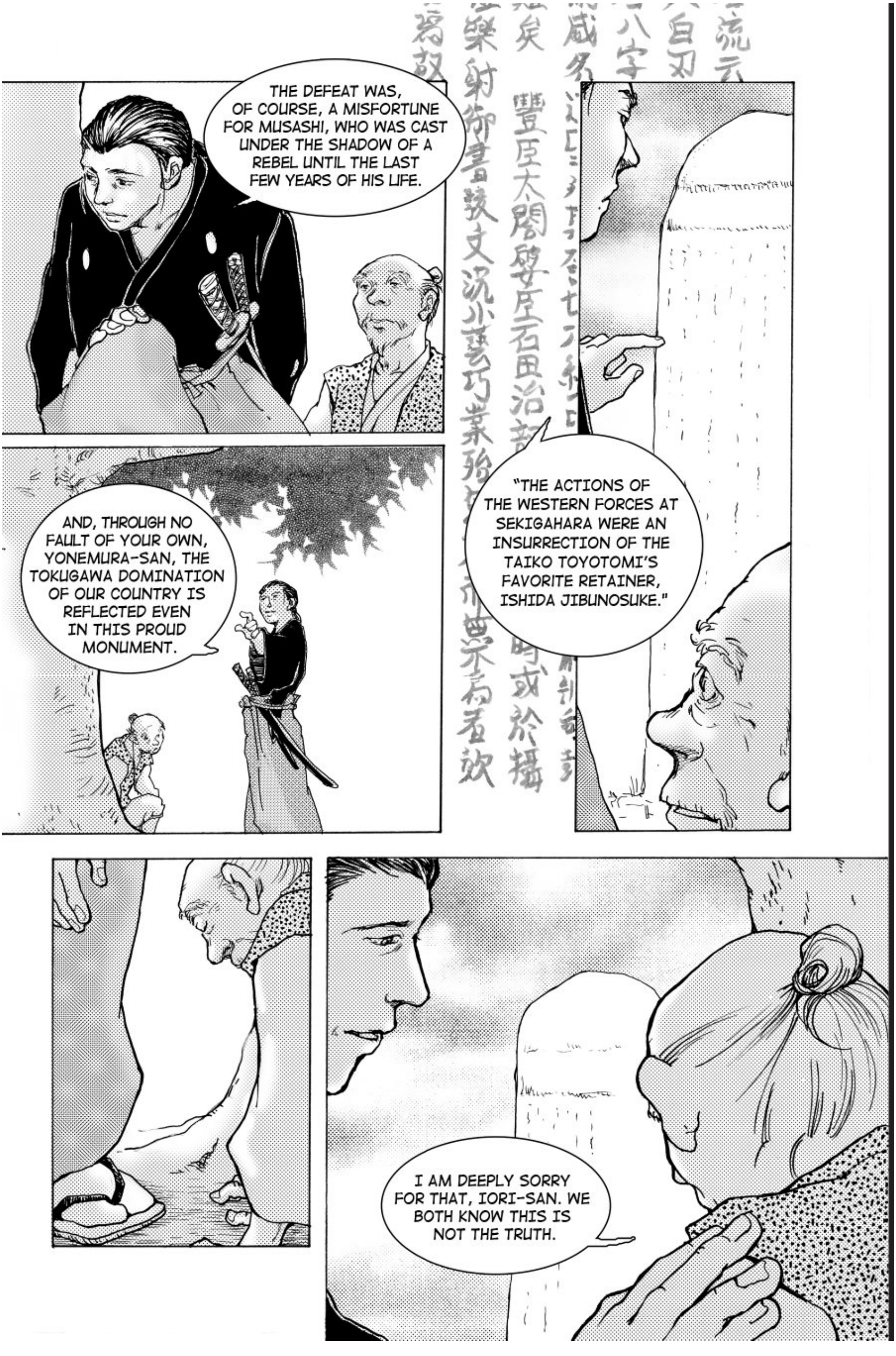

HE ALSO ADMIRED TOYOTOMI HIDEYOSHI, WHO HAD RISEN TO POWER FROM A LOW STATUS BECAUSE OF HIS MILITARY PROWESS WHILE MUSASHI WAS A CHILD. HE FOUGHT THEN UNDER THE COMMAND OF UKITA HIDEIE, WHO BROUGHT 17,000 MEN TO THE BATTLE.

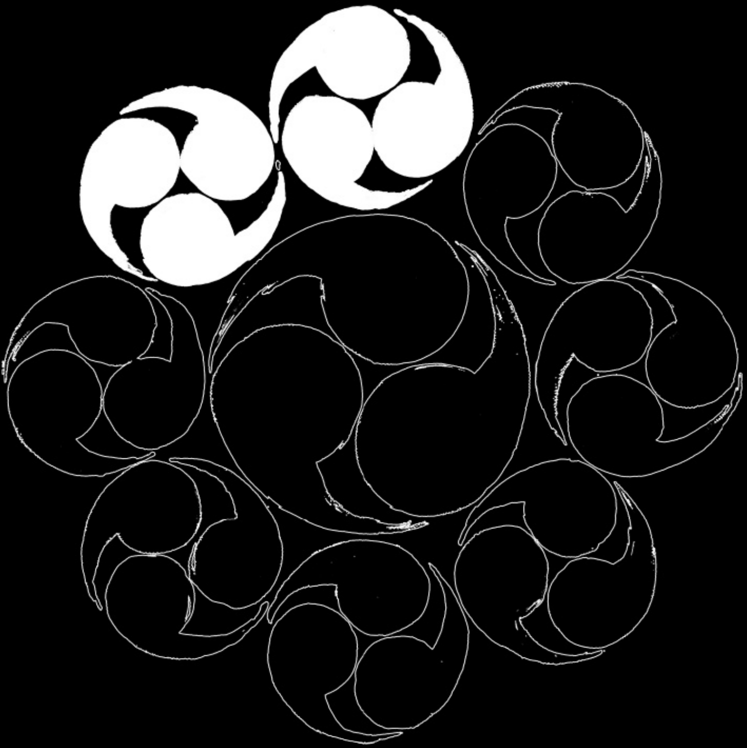


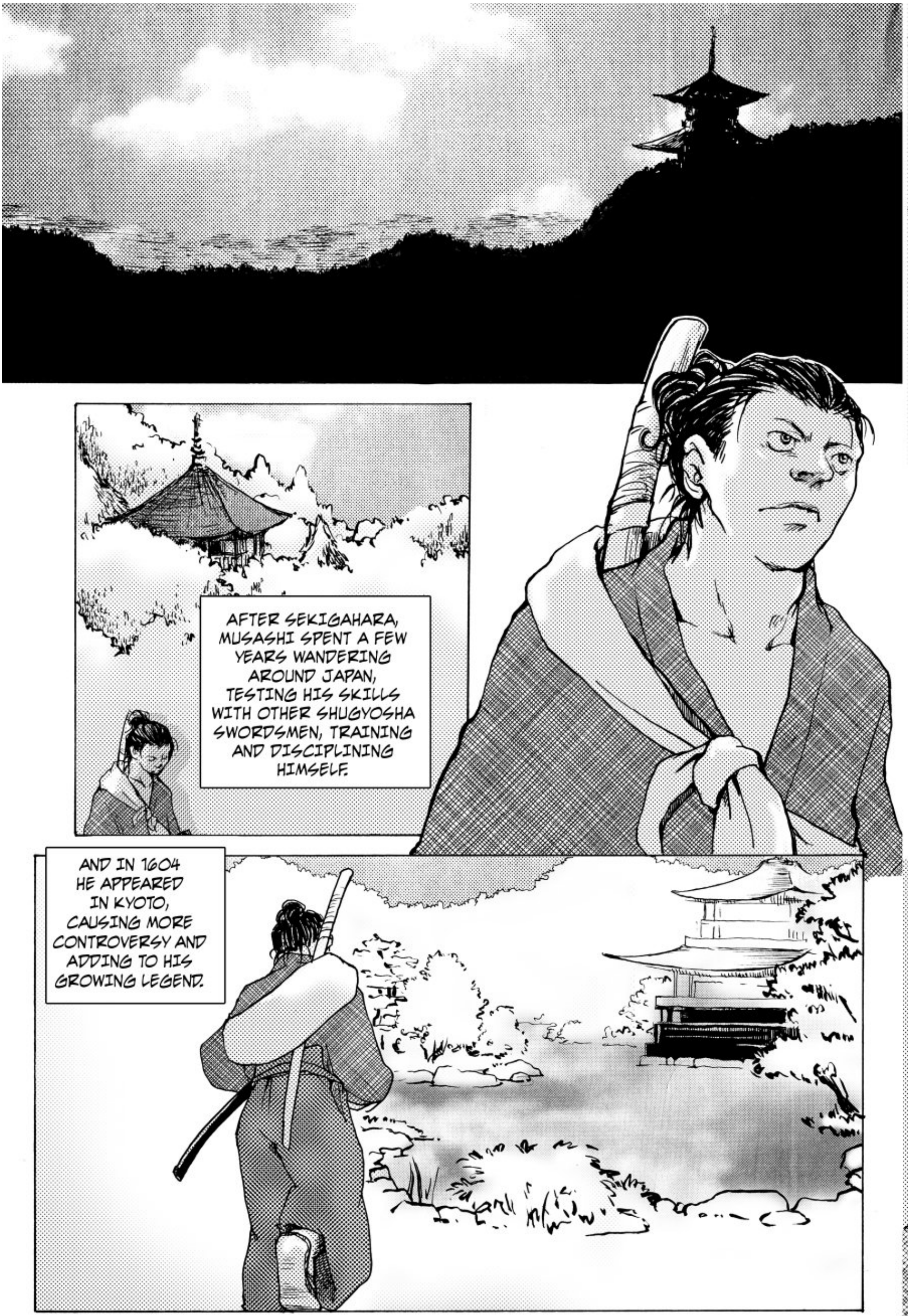

IT WAS LATER NOTED THAT MUSASHI'S ACHIEVEMENTS STOOD OUT FROM THE CROWD AND WERE KNOWN BY THE SOLDIERS IN ALL CAMPS.

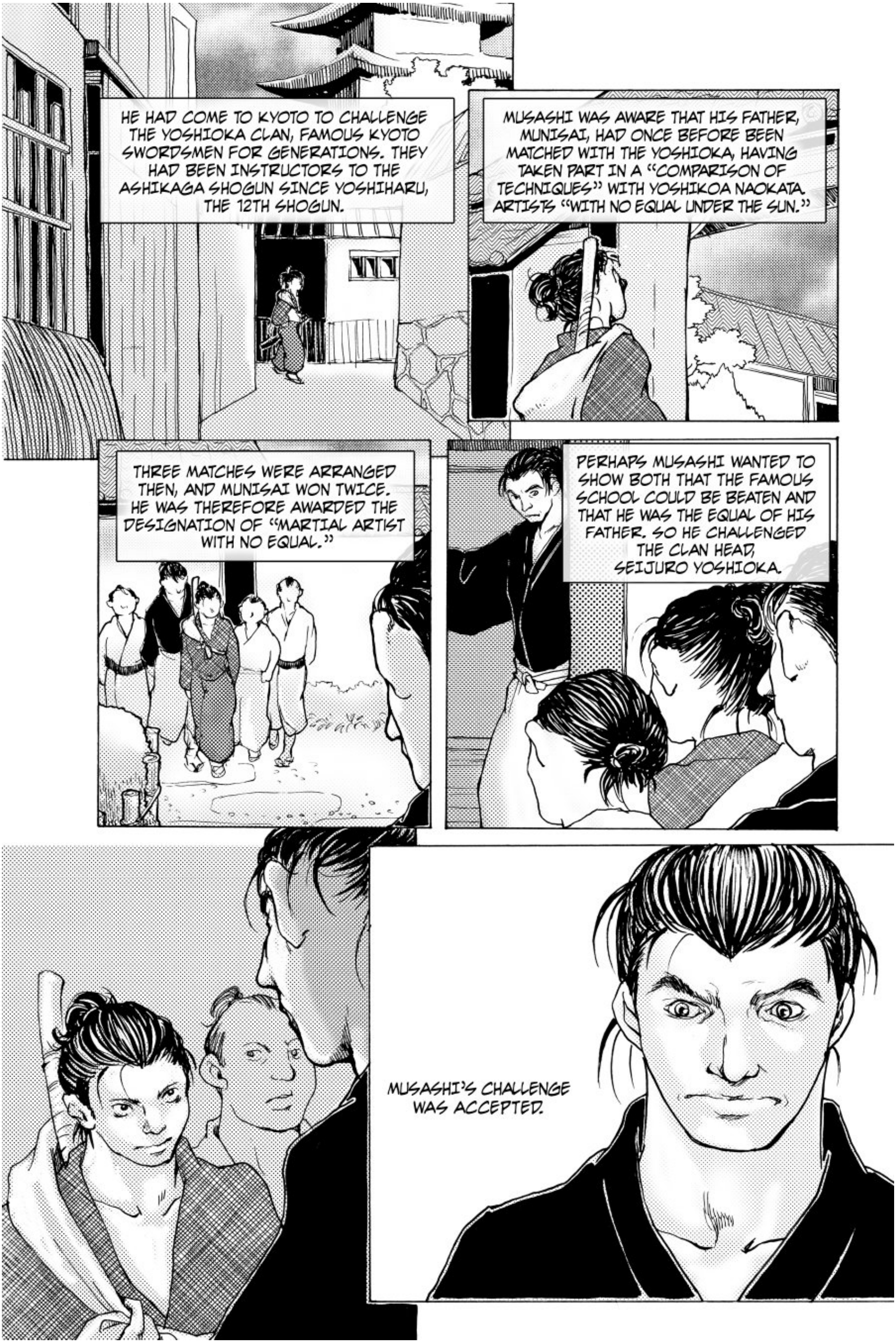
BUT INDIVIDUAL SKILL AND BRAVERY ALONE ARE NOT ENOUGH TO WIN BATTLES. AS YOU KNOW, IEYASU TOKUGAWA LURED SOME OF THE WESTERN COMMANDERS, LIKE KIKKAWA HIROIE AND KOBAYAKAWA HIDEAKI, OVER TO HIS SIDE WITH PROMISES OF REWARDS AFTER THE WAR. SO THE BATTLE WAS TAKEN BY THE TOKUGAWA EASTERN ARMY.

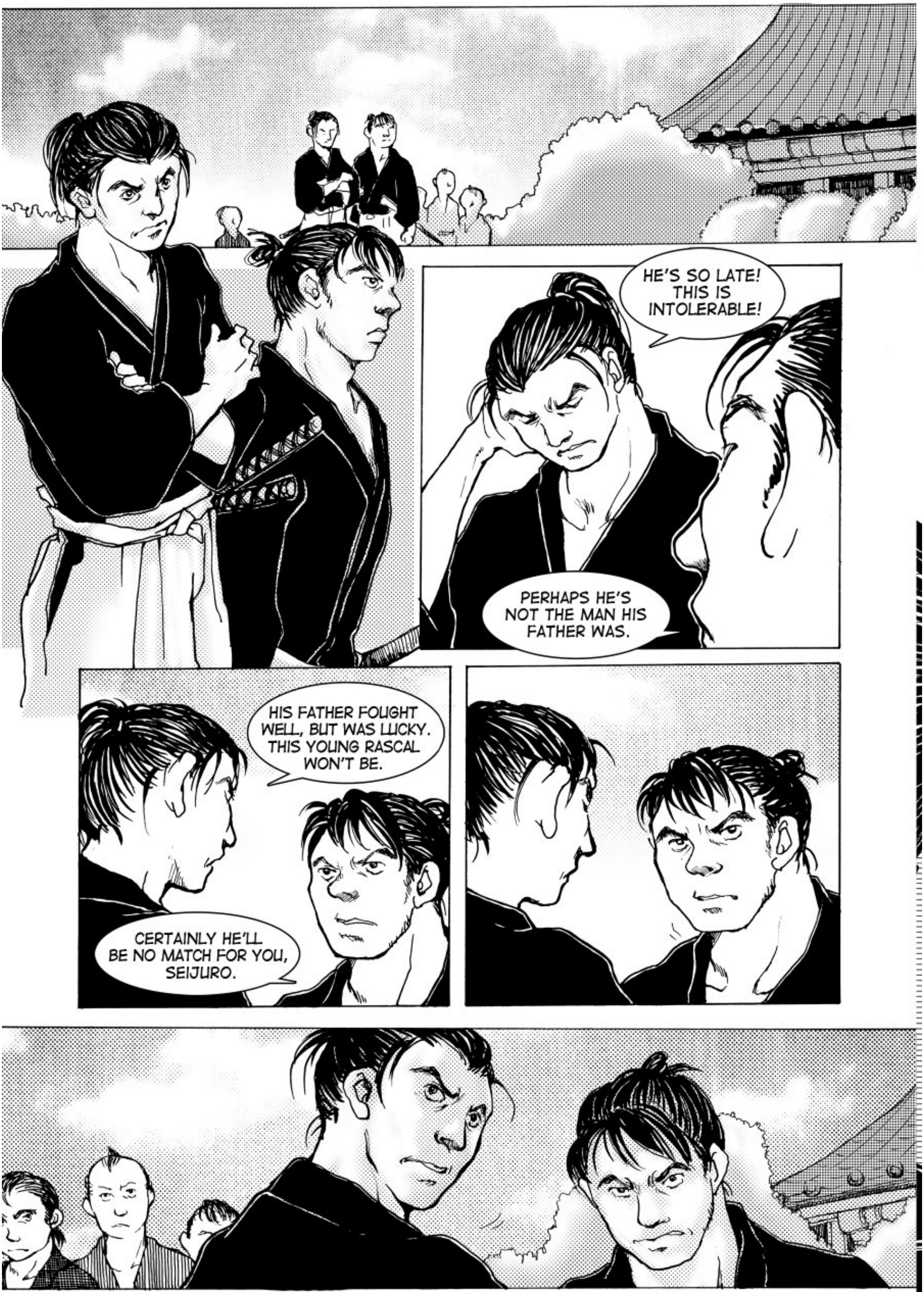

石田 三成
豊臣
島 左近
蒲生 郷舎
島津 義弘
小西 行長
宇喜多 秀家
戸田 重政
大谷 吉継
小早川 秀秋
黒田 長政
細川 忠興
加藤 嘉明
筒井 定次
田中 吉政
福島 正則
古田 重勝
織田 有楽
金森 長近
生駒 一正
井伊 直正
松平 忠吉
藤堂 高虎
寺沢 広高
本多 忠勝
京極 高知
徳川 家康
有馬 豊氏
山内 一豊
浅野 幸長
毛利 秀元

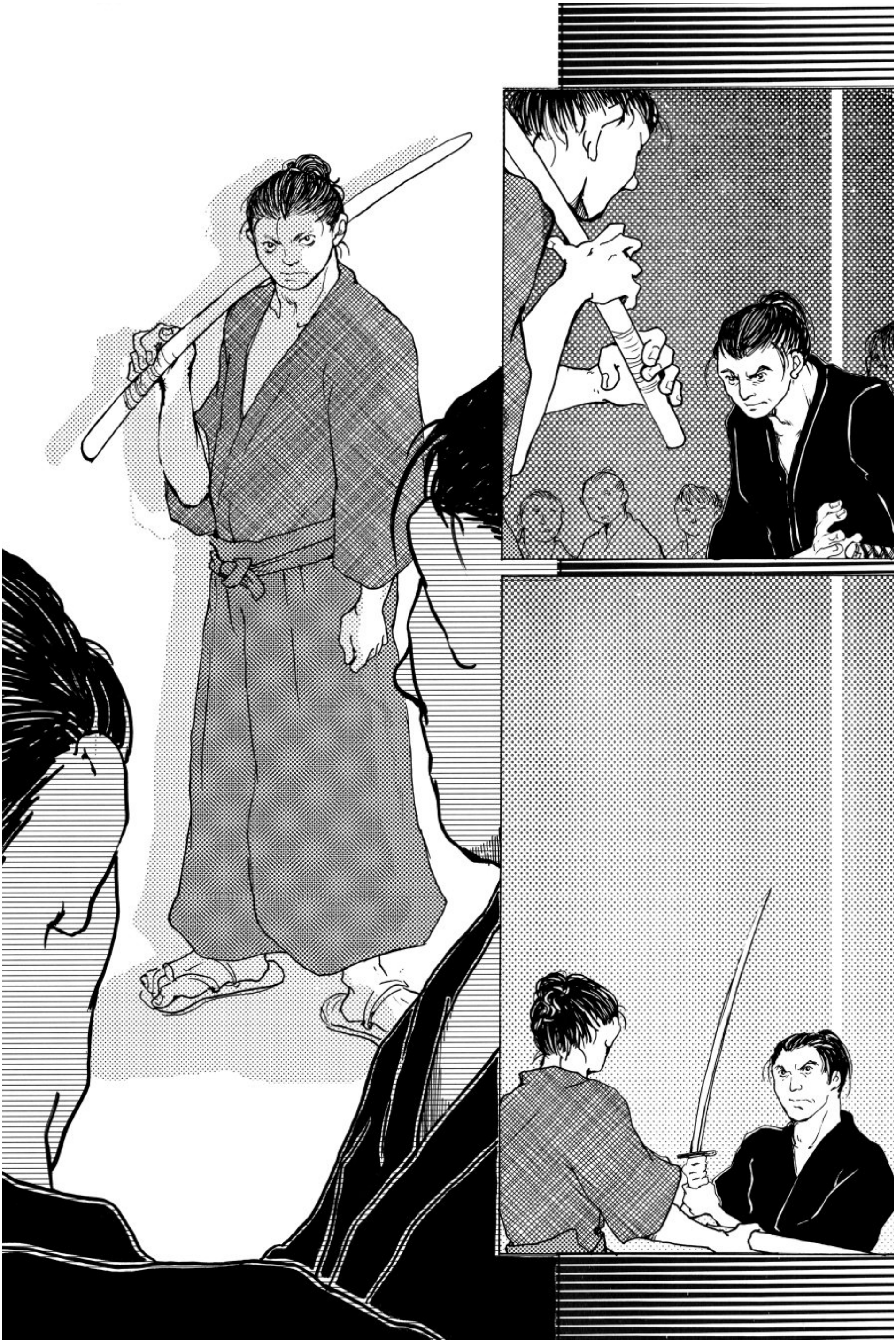

THE DEFEAT WAS, OF COURSE, A MISFORTUNE FOR MUSASHI, WHO WAS CAST UNDER THE SHADOW OF A REBEL UNTIL THE LAST FEW YEARS OF HIS LIFE.
AND, THROUGH NO FAULT OF YOUR OWN, YONEMURA-SAN, THE TOKUGAWA DOMINATION OF OUR COUNTRY IS REFLECTED EVEN IN THIS PROUD MONUMENT.
"THE ACTIONS OF THE WESTERN FORCES AT SEKIGAHARA WERE AN INSURRECTION OF THE TAIKO TOYOTOMI'S FAVORITE RETAINER, ISHIDA JIBUNOSUKE."
I AM DEEPLY SORRY FOR THAT, IORI-SAN. WE BOTH KNOW THIS IS NOT THE TRUTH.

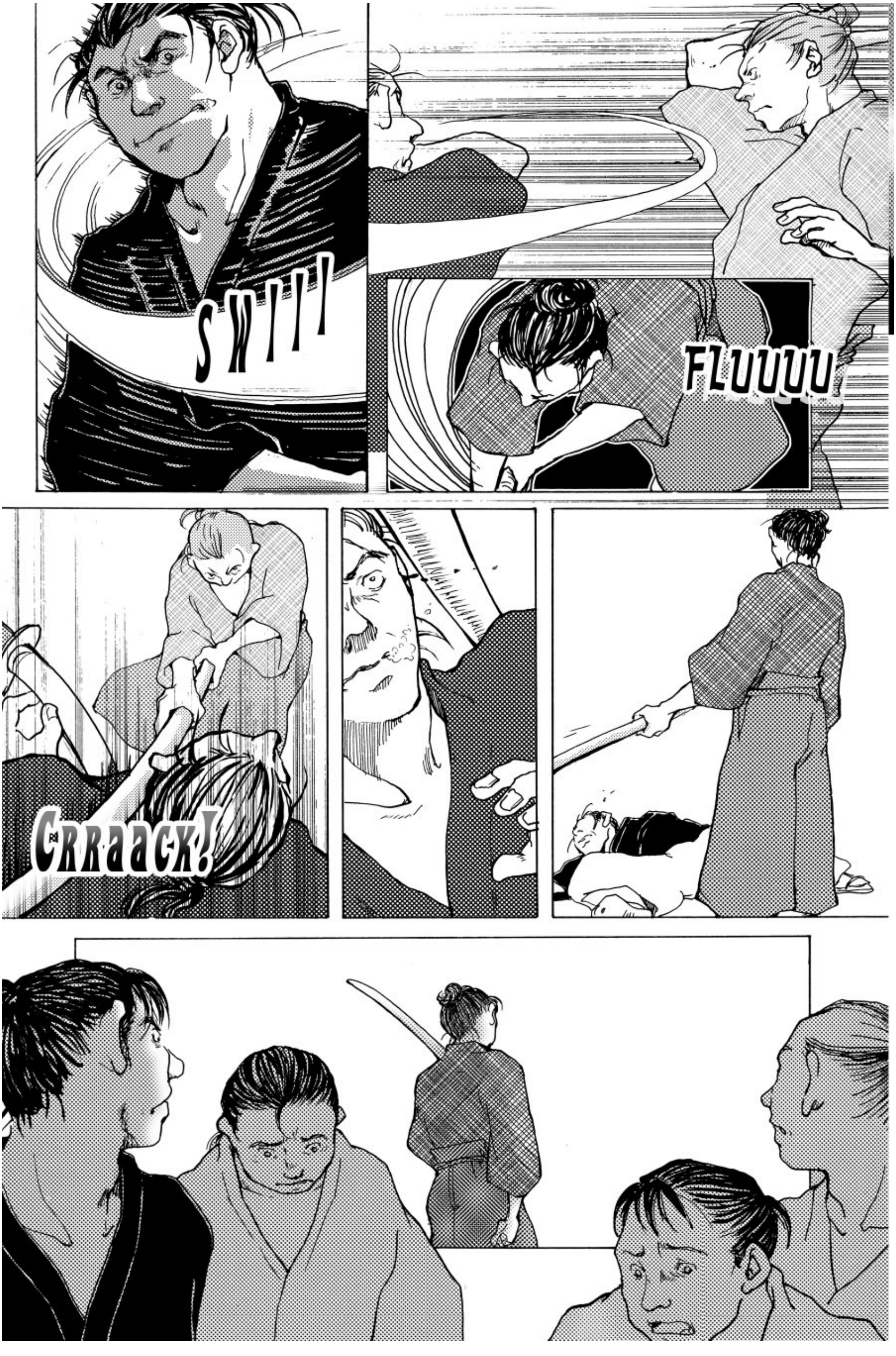


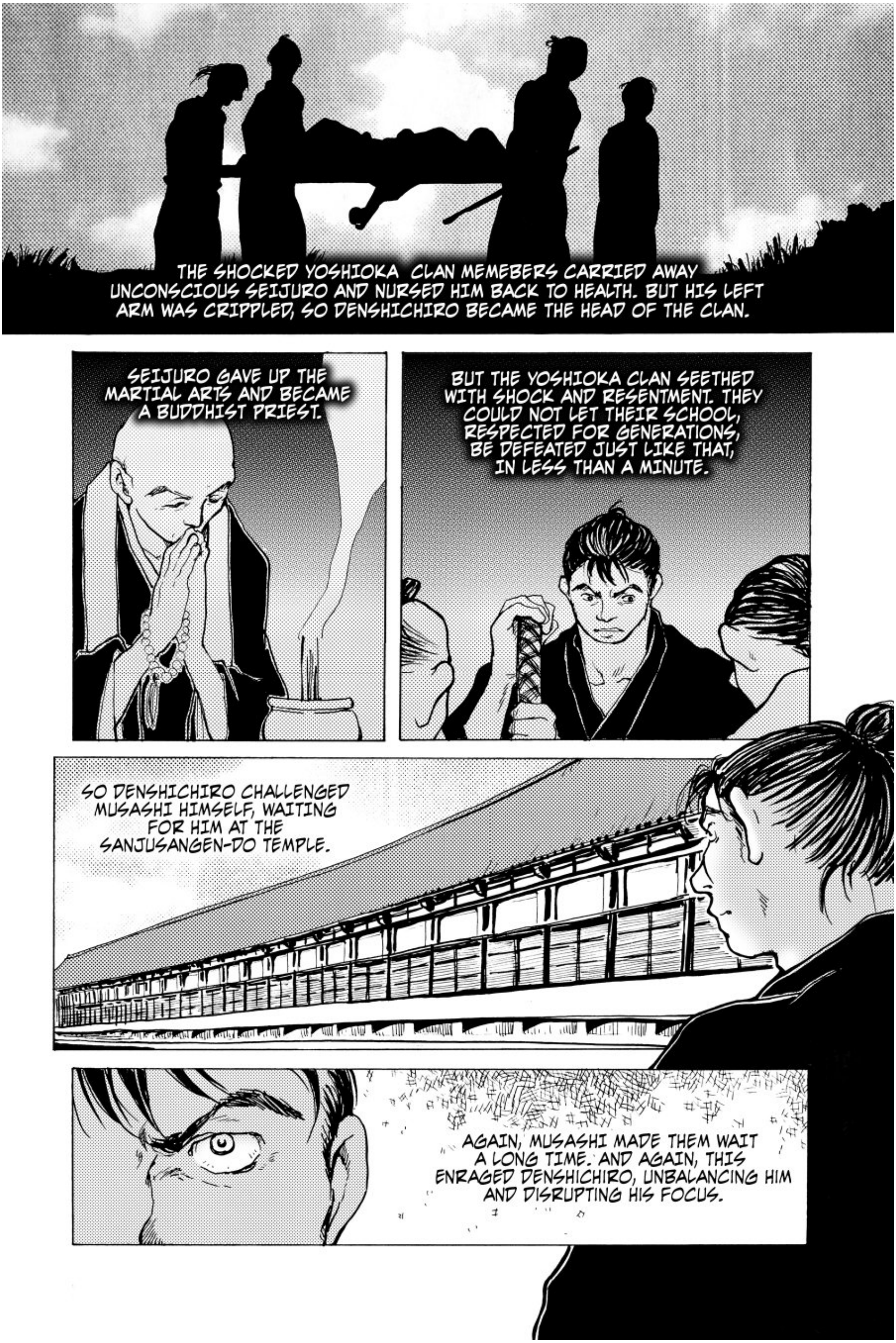

AFTER SEKIGAHARA, MUSASHI SPENT A FEW YEARS WANDERING AROUND JAPAN, TESTING HIS SKILLS WITH OTHER SHUGYOSHA SWORDSMEN, TRAINING AND DISCIPLINING HIMSELF.
AND IN 1604 HE APPEARED IN KYOTO, CAUSING MORE CONTROVERSY AND ADDING TO HIS GROWING LEGEND.

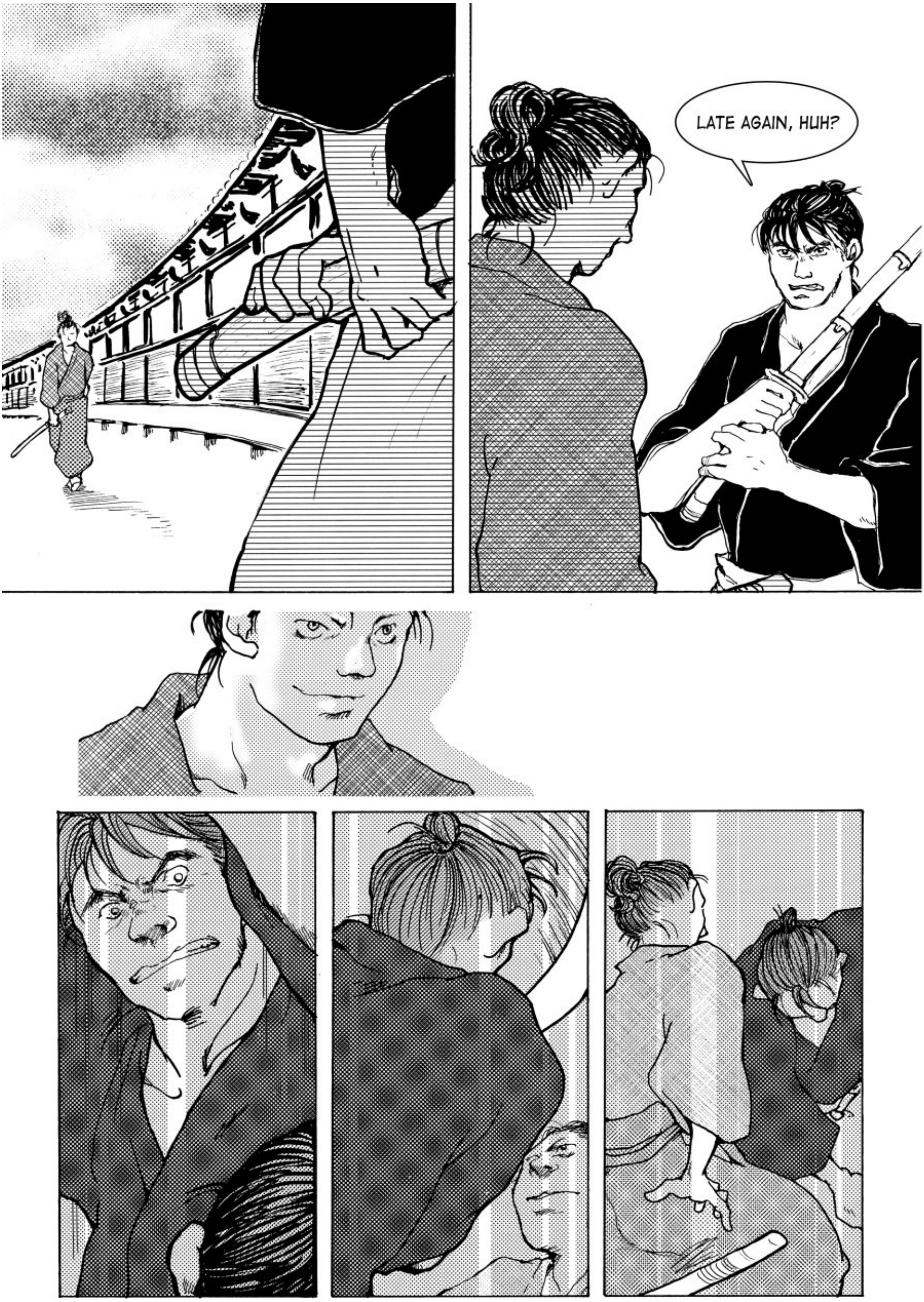

HE HAD COME TO KYOTO TO CHALLENGE THE YOSHIOKA CLAN, FAMOUS KYOTO SWORDSMEN FOR GENERATIONS. THEY HAD BEEN INSTRUCTORS TO THE ASHIKAGA SHOGUN SINCE YOSHIHARU, THE 12TH SHOGUN.
MUSASHI WAS AWARE THAT HIS FATHER, MUNISAI, HAD ONCE BEFORE BEEN MATCHED WITH THE YOSHIOKA, HAVING TAKEN PART IN A "COMPARISON OF TECHNIQUES" WITH YOSHIKOA NAOKATA. ARTISTS "WITH NO EQUAL UNDER THE SUN."
THREE MATCHES WERE ARRANGED THEN, AND MUNISAI WON TWICE. HE WAS THEREFORE AWARDED THE DESIGNATION OF "MARTIAL ARTIST WITH NO EQUAL."
PERHAPS MUSASHI WANTED TO SHOW BOTH THAT THE FAMOUS SCHOOL COULD BE BEATEN AND THAT HE WAS THE EQUAL OF HIS FATHER. SO HE CHALLENGED THE CLAN HEAD, SEIJURO YOSHIOKA.
MUSASHI'S CHALLENGE WAS ACCEPTED.

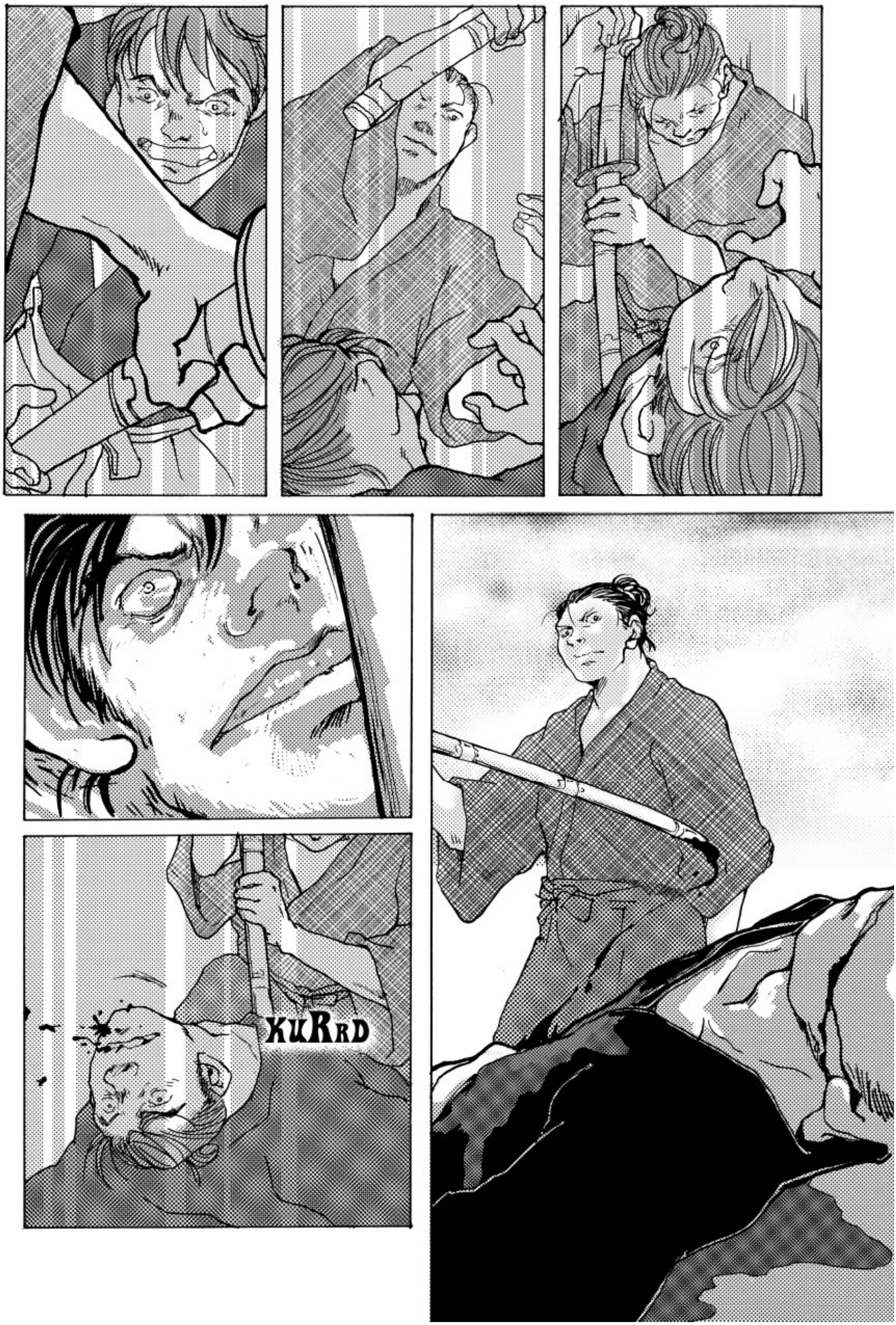

HE'S SO LATE! THIS IS INTOLERABLE!
PERHAPS HE'S NOT THE MAN HIS FATHER WAS.
HIS FATHER FOUGHT WELL, BUT WAS LUCKY. THIS YOUNG RASCAL WON'T BE.
CERTAINLY HE'LL BE NO MATCH FOR YOU, SEIJURO.

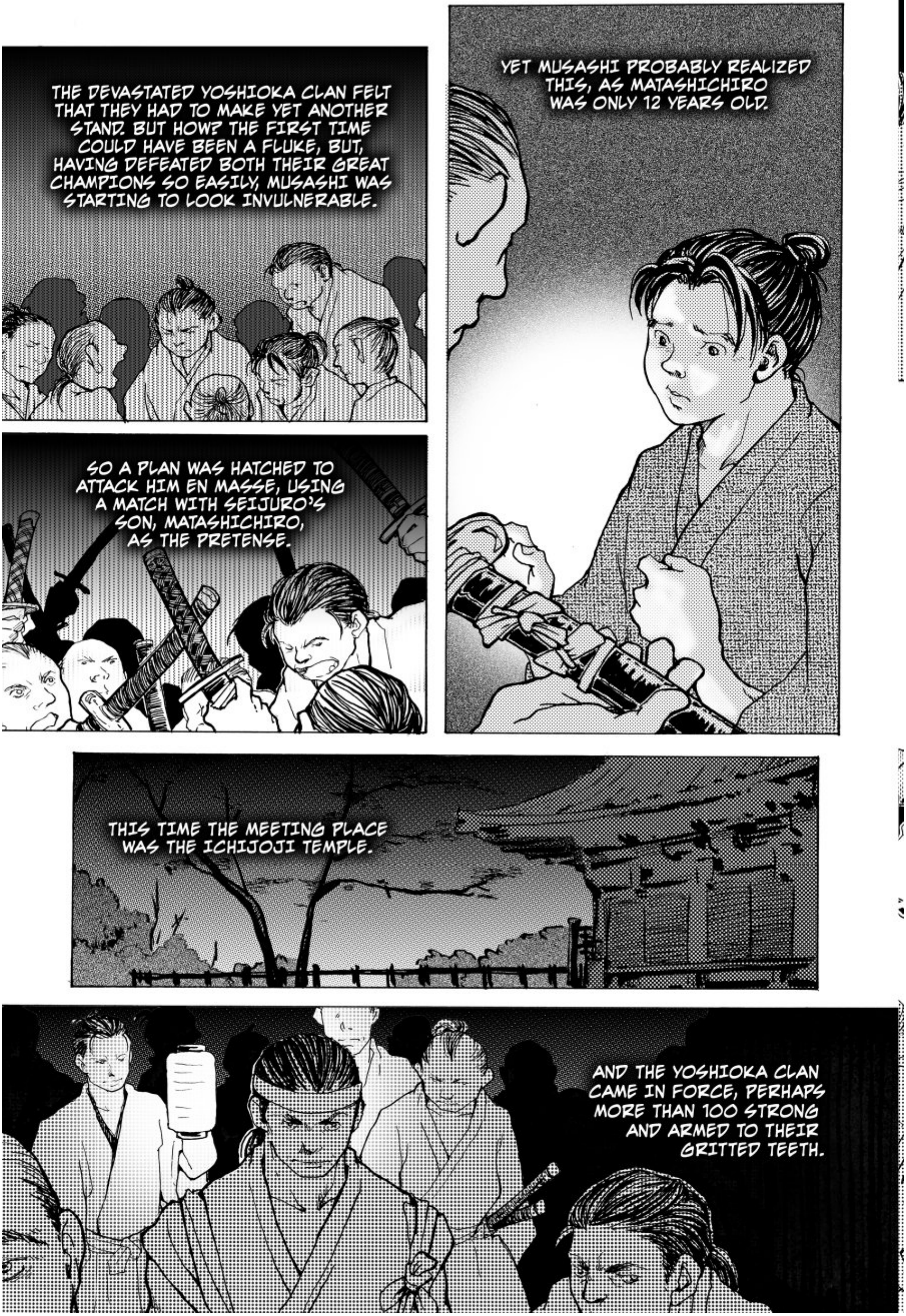


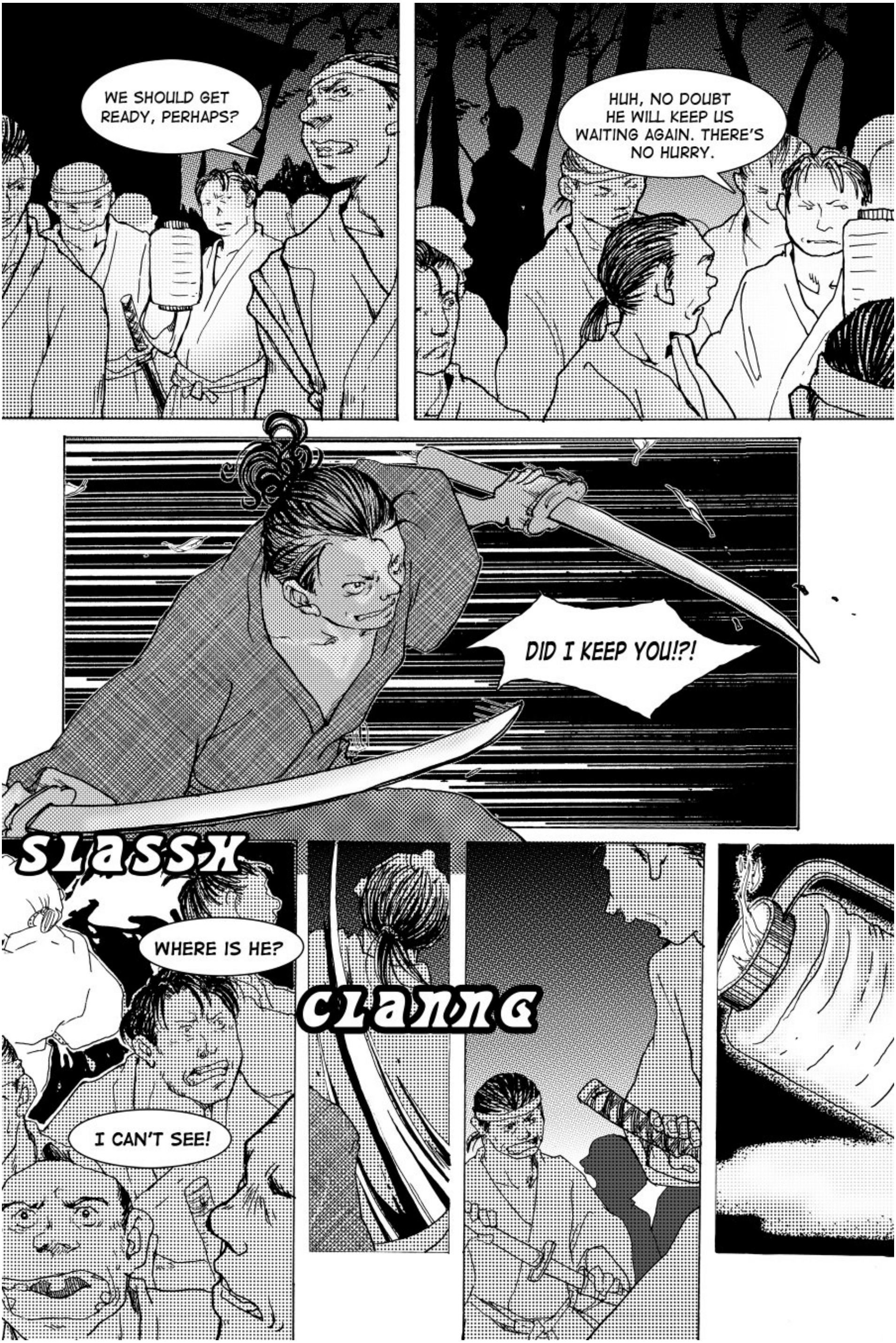

SWIII
FLUUUU
CRRAACK!

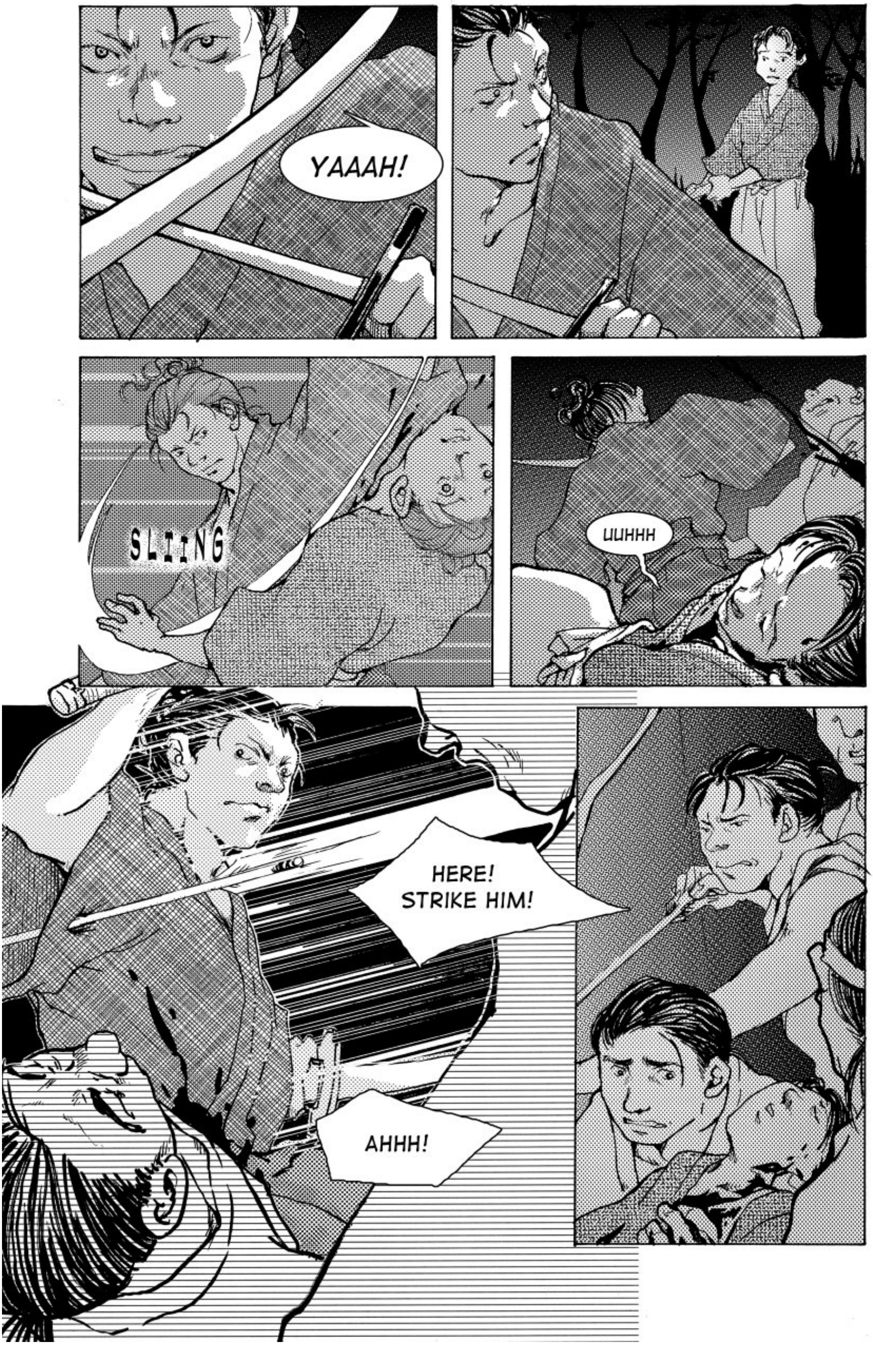

THE SHOCKED YOSHIOKA CLAN MEMEBERS CARRIED AWAY UNCONSCIOUS SEIJURO AND NURSED HIM BACK TO HEALTH. BUT HIS LEFT ARM WAS CRIPPLED, SO DENSHICHIRO BECAME THE HEAD OF THE CLAN.
SEIJURO GAVE UP THE MARTIAL ARTS AND BECAME A BUDDHIST PRIEST.
BUT THE YOSHIOKA CLAN SEETHED WITH SHOCK AND RESENTMENT. THEY COULD NOT LET THEIR SCHOOL, RESPECTED FOR GENERATIONS, BE DEFEATED JUST LIKE THAT, IN LESS THAN A MINUTE.
SO DENSHICHIRO CHALLENGED MUSASHI HIMSELF, WAITING FOR HIM AT THE SANJUSANGEN-DO TEMPLE.
AGAIN, MUSASHI MADE THEM WAIT A LONG TIME. AND AGAIN, THIS ENRAGED DENSHICHIRO, UNBALANCING HIM AND DISRUPTING HIS FOCUS.

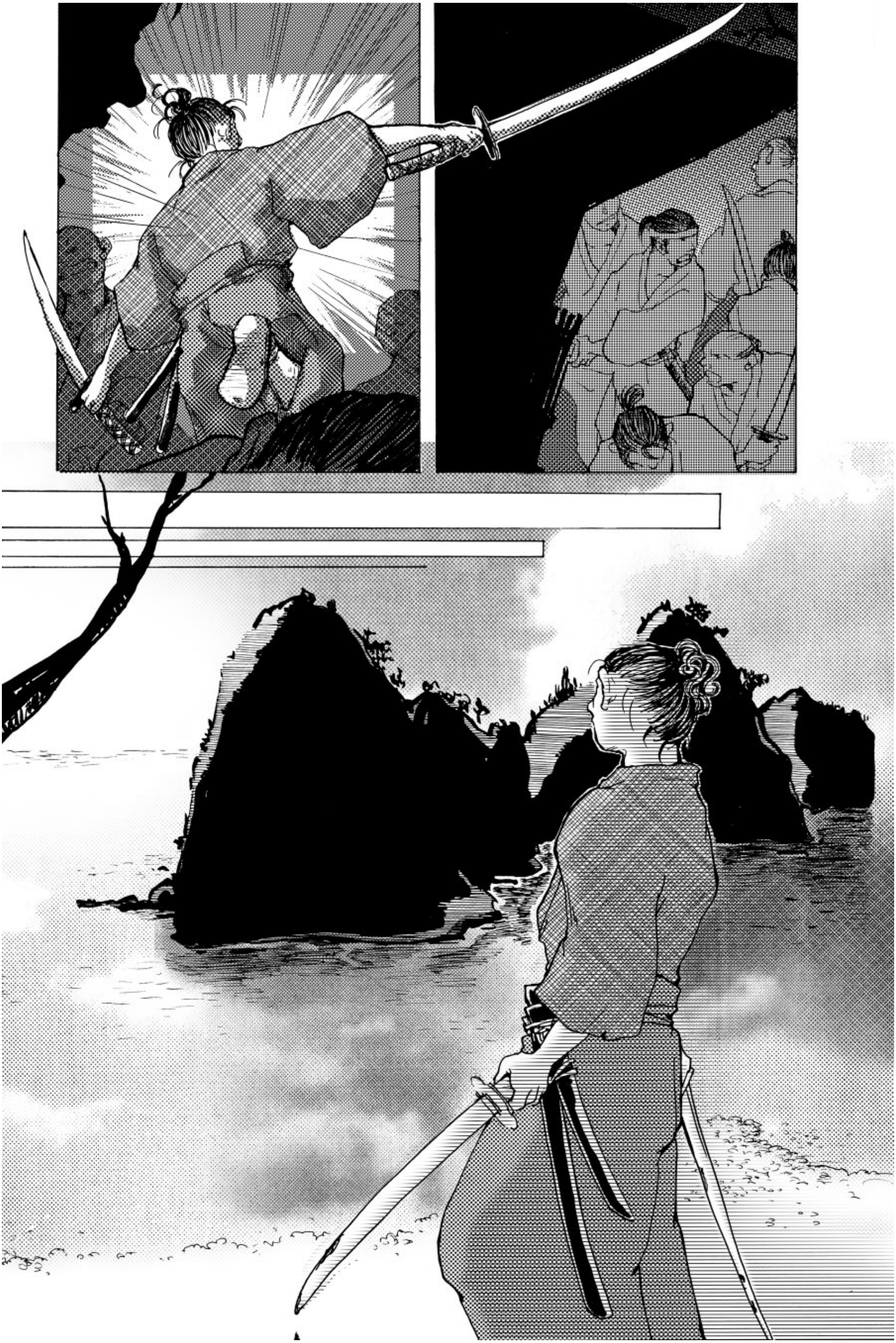

LATE AGAIN, HUH?

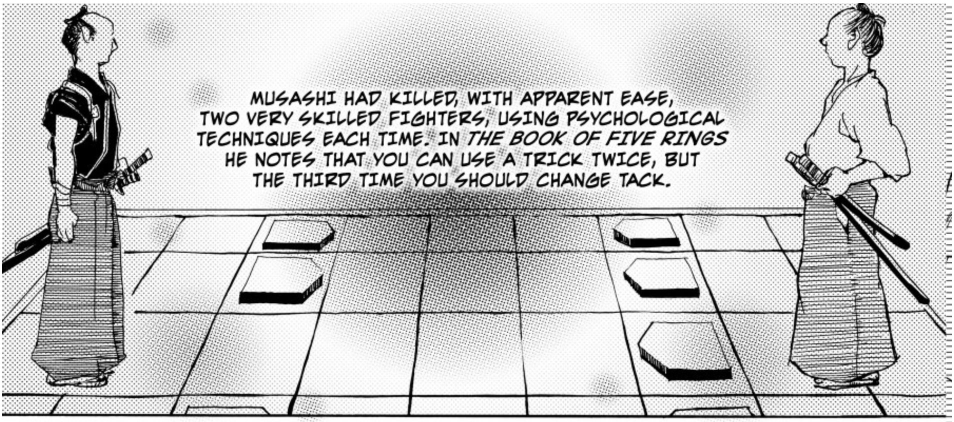

KURRD


THE DEVASTATED YOSHIOKA CLAN FELT THAT THEY HAD TO MAKE YET ANOTHER STAND. BUT HOW? THE FIRST TIME COULD HAVE BEEN A FLUKE, BUT, HAVING DEFEATED BOTH THEIR GREAT CHAMPIONS SO EASILY, MUSASHI WAS STARTING TO LOOK INVULNERABLE.
SO A PLAN WAS HATCHED TO ATTACK HIM EN MASSE, USING A MATCH WITH SEIJURO'S SON, MATASHICHIRO, AS THE PRETENSE.
YET MUSASHI PROBABLY REALIZED THIS, AS MATASHICHIRO WAS ONLY 12 YEARS OLD.
THIS TIME THE MEETING PLACE WAS THE ICHIJOJI TEMPLE.
AND THE YOSHIOKA CLAN CAME IN FORCE, PERHAPS MORE THAN 100 STRONG AND ARMED TO THEIR GRITTED TEETH.

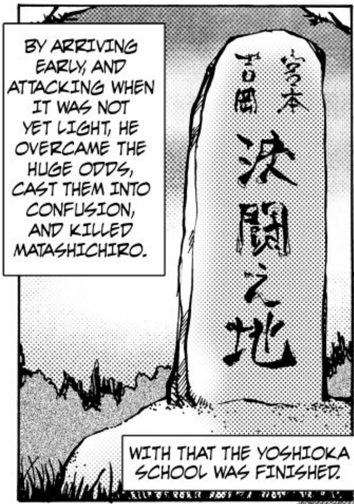

WE SHOULD GET READY, PERHAPS?
HUH, NO DOUBT HE WILL KEEP US WAITING AGAIN. THERE'S NO HURRY.
DID I KEEP YOU!?!
SLASSH
WHERE IS HE?
I CAN'T SEE!
CLANNG


YAAAH!
SLIING
UUHHH
HERE! STRIKE HIM!
AHHH!



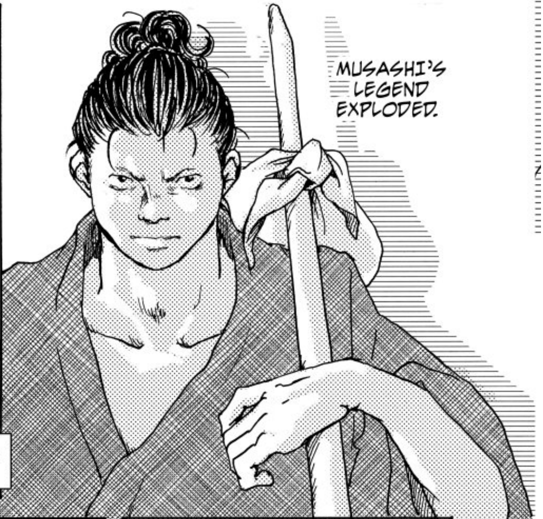


MUSASHI HAD KILLED, WITH APPARENT EASE, TWO VERY SKILLED FIGHTERS, USING PSYCHOLOGICAL TECHNIQUES EACH TIME. IN *THE BOOK OF FIVE RINGS* HE NOTES THAT YOU CAN USE A TRICK TWICE, BUT THE THIRD TIME YOU SHOULD CHANGE TACK.

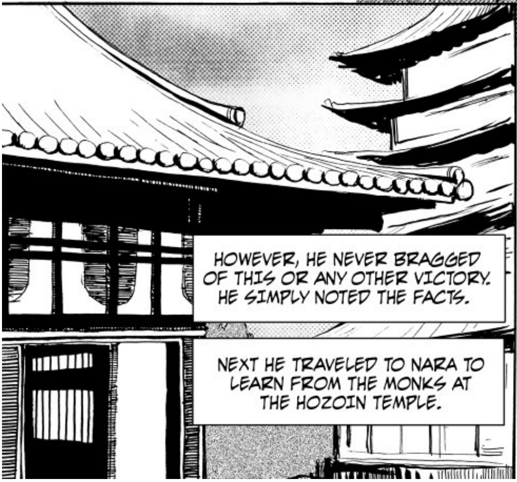


BY ARRIVING EARLY, AND ATTACKING WHEN IT WAS NOT YET LIGHT, HE OVERCAME THE HUGE ODDS, CAST THEM INTO CONFUSION, AND KILLED MATASHICHIRO.

WITH THAT THE YOSHIOKA SCHOOL WAS FINISHED.

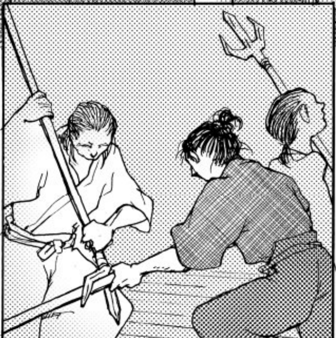


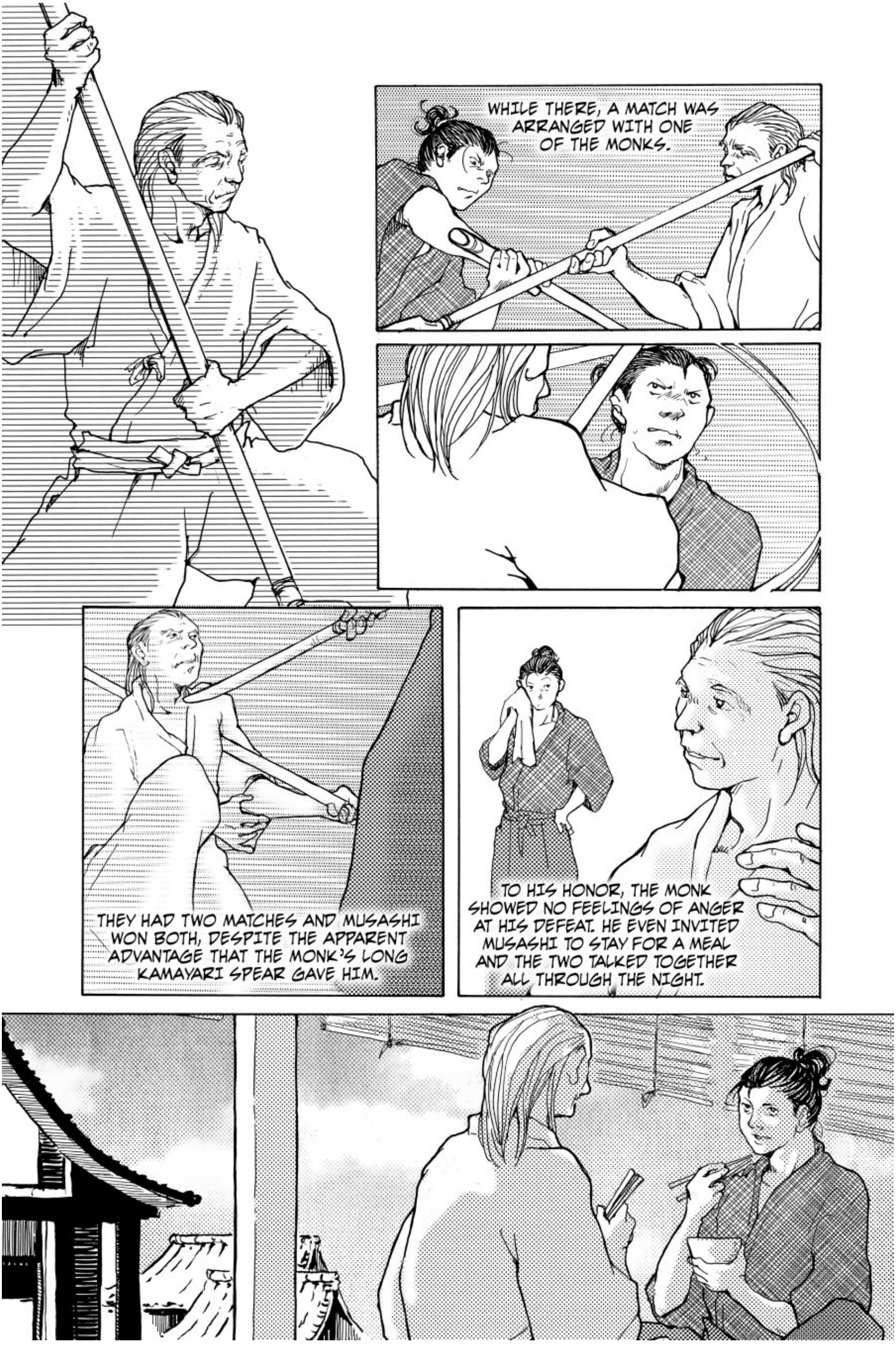
MUSASHI'S LEGEND EXPLODED.

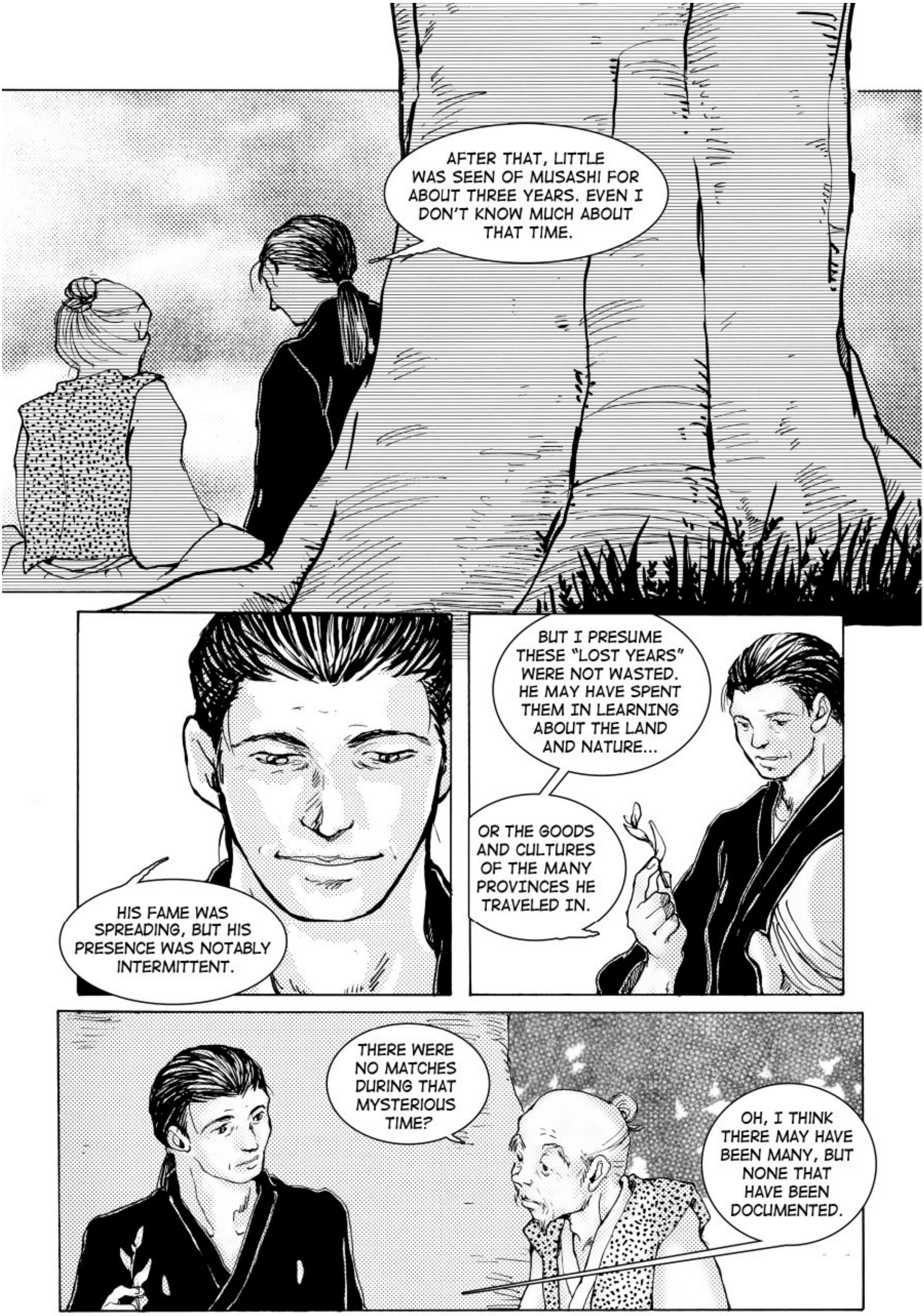


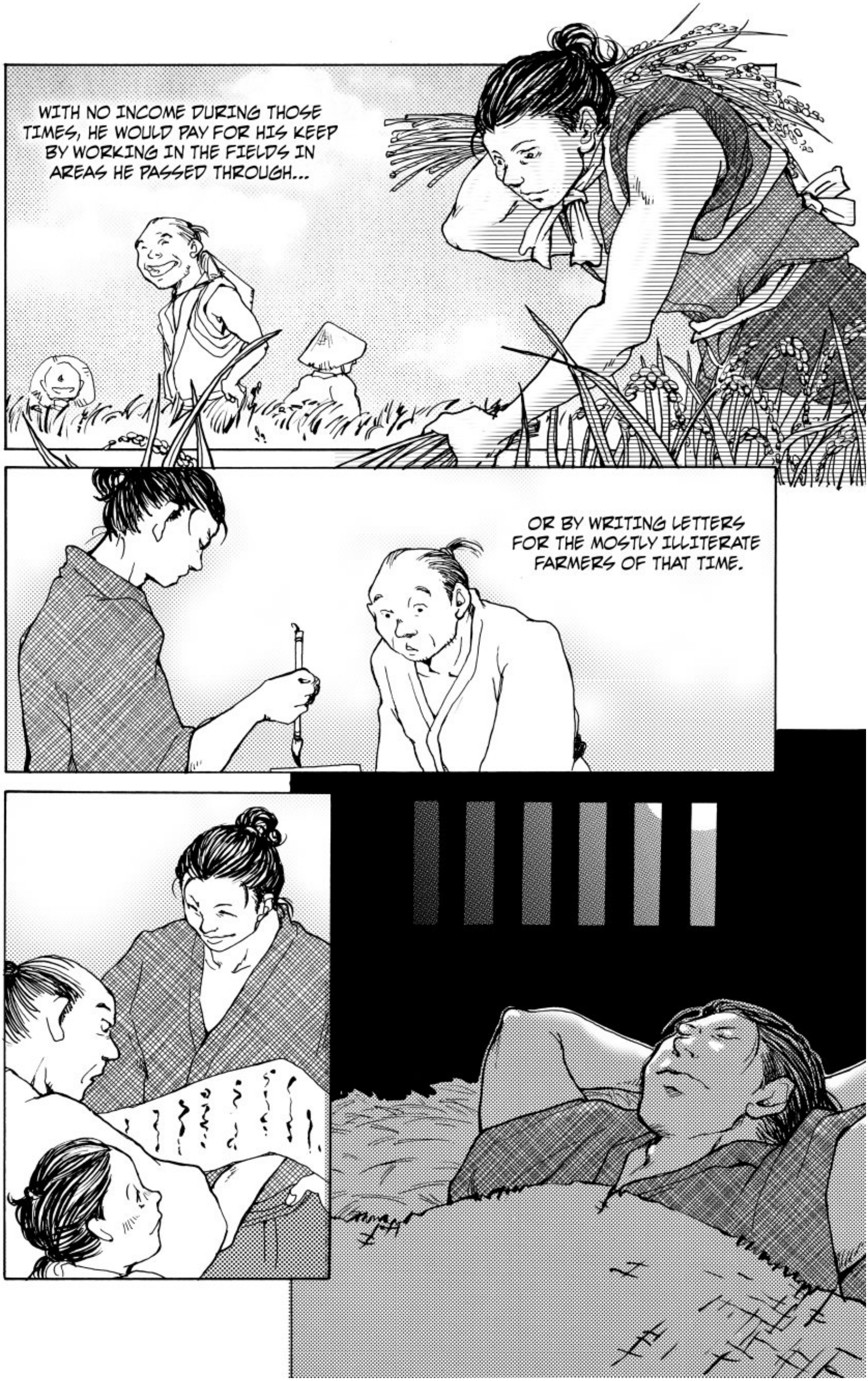
HOWEVER, HE NEVER BRAGGED OF THIS OR ANY OTHER VICTORY. HE SIMPLY NOTED THE FACTS.

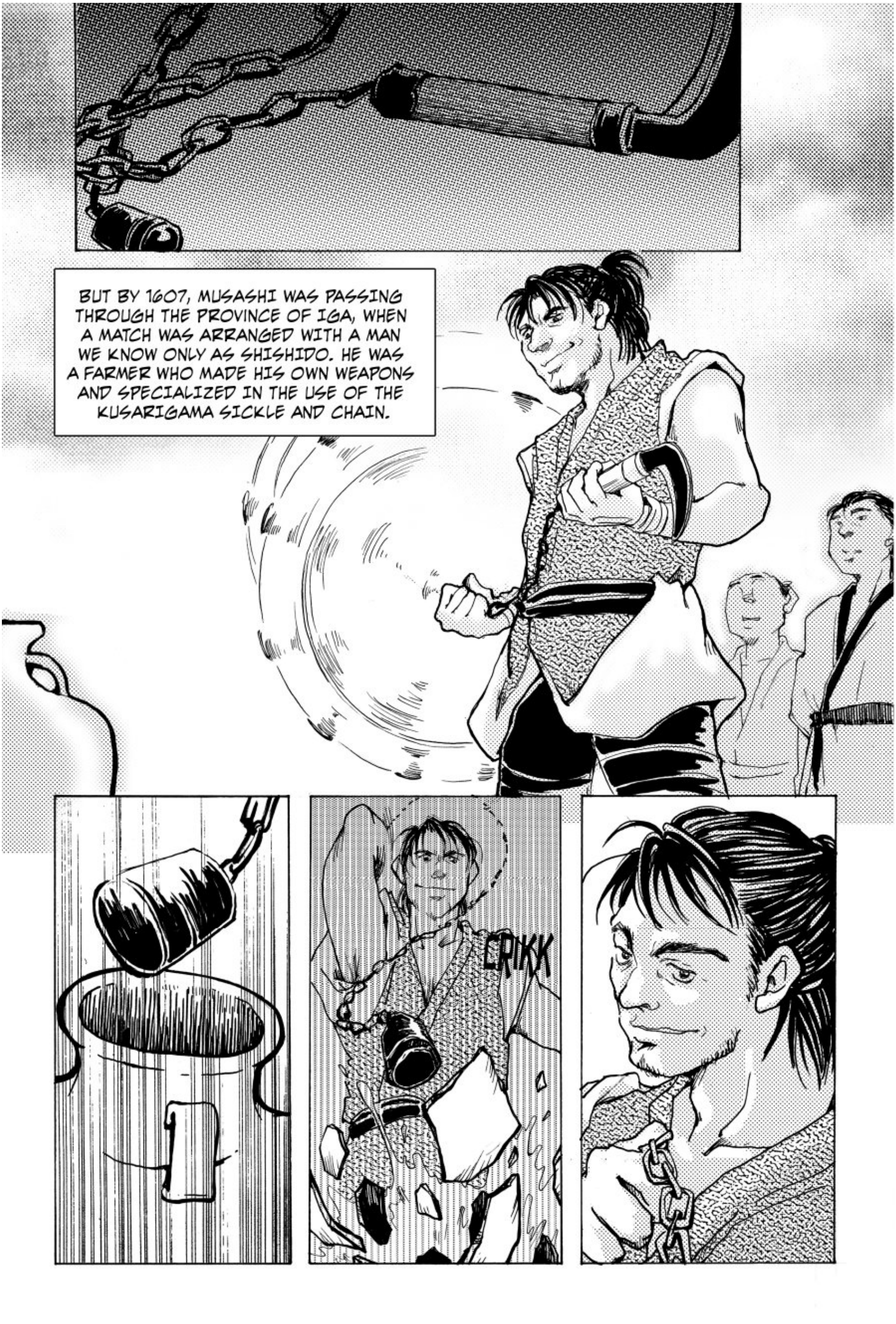
NEXT HE TRAVELED TO NARA TO LEARN FROM THE MONKS AT THE HOZOIN TEMPLE.

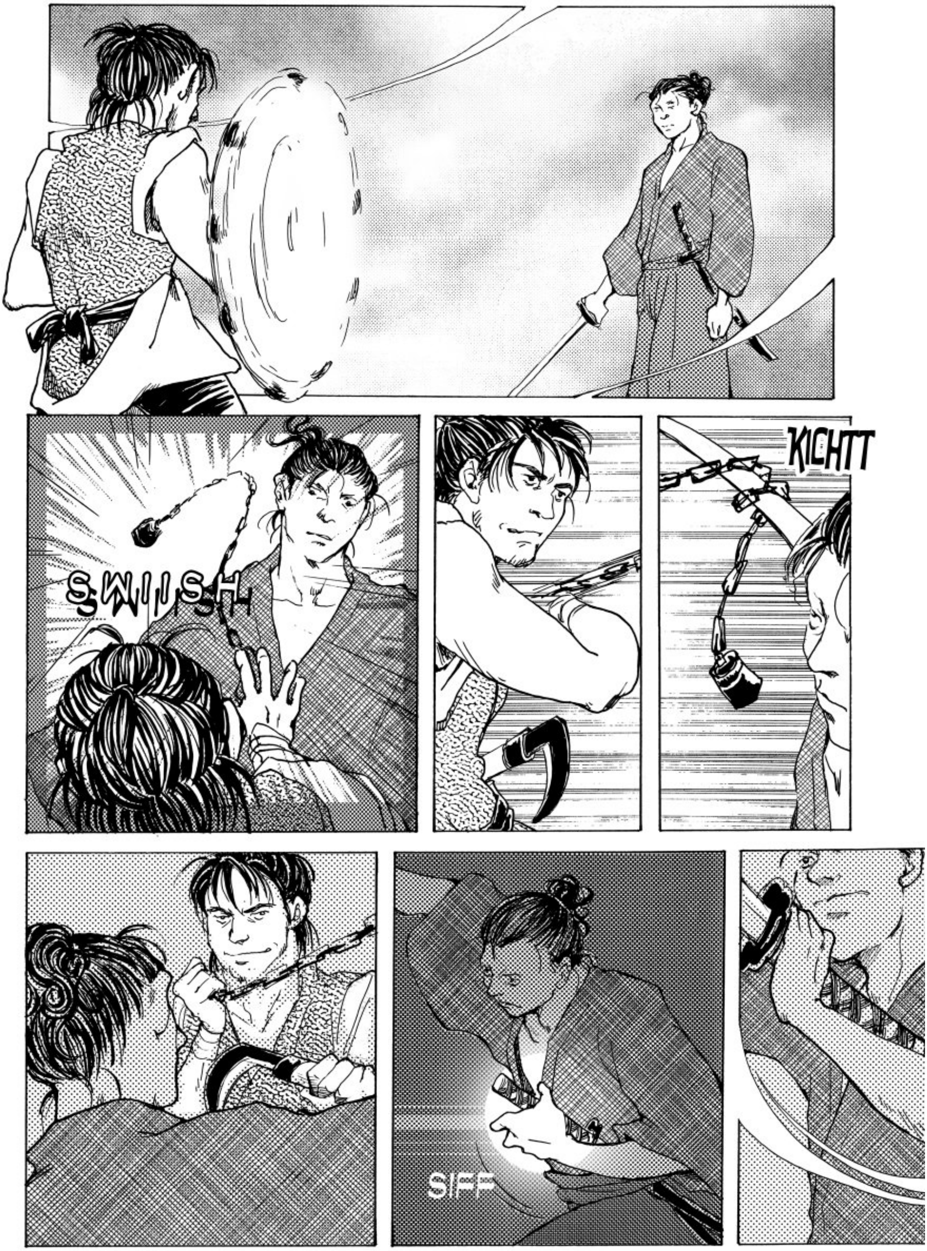


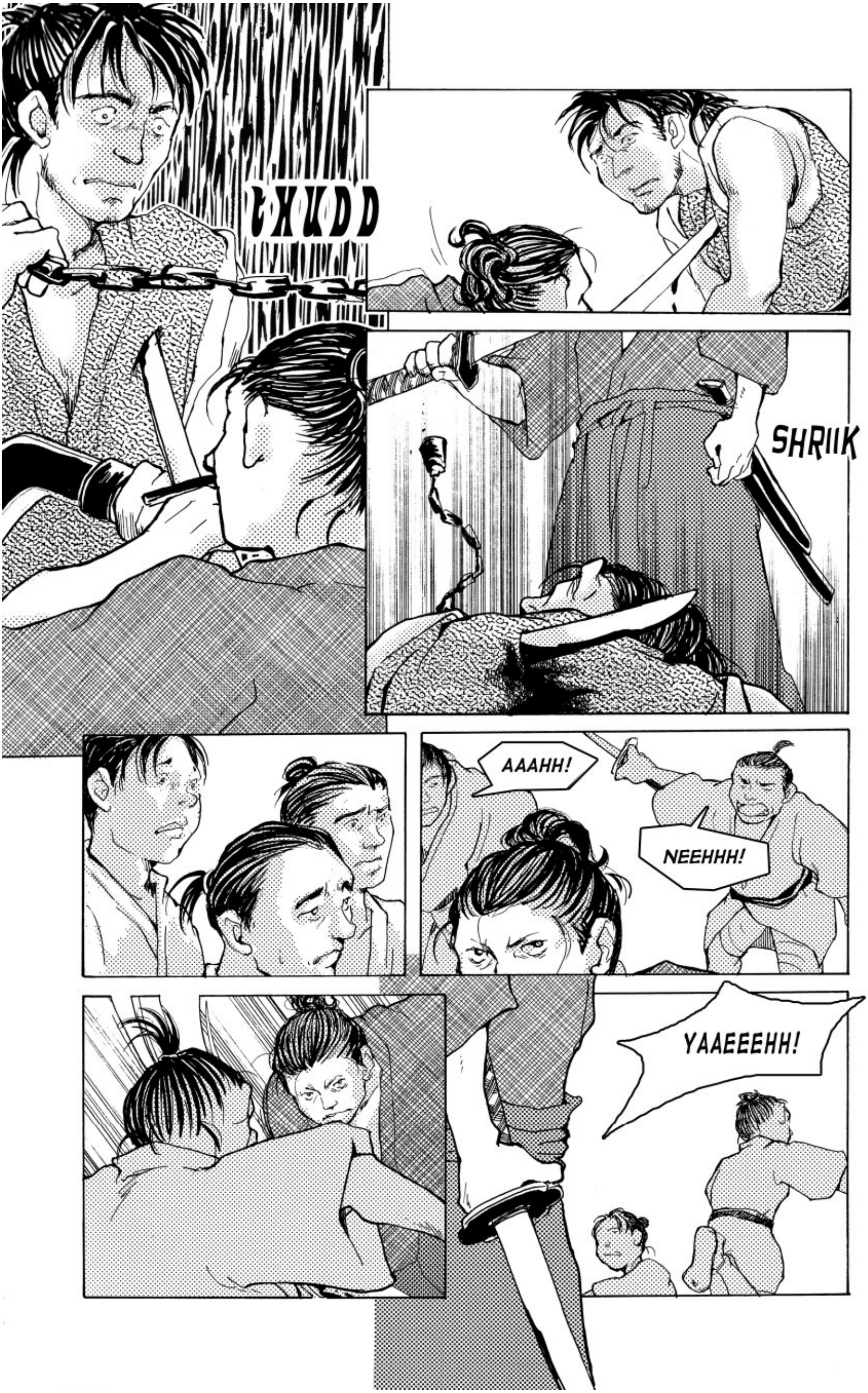

WHILE THERE, A MATCH WAS ARRANGED WITH ONE OF THE MONKS.
THEY HAD TWO MATCHES AND MUSASHI WON BOTH, DESPITE THE APPARENT ADVANTAGE THAT THE MONK'S LONG KAMAYARI SPEAR GAVE HIM.
TO HIS HONOR, THE MONK SHOWED NO FEELINGS OF ANGER AT HIS DEFEAT. HE EVEN INVITED MUSASHI TO STAY FOR A MEAL AND THE TWO TALKED TOGETHER ALL THROUGH THE NIGHT.

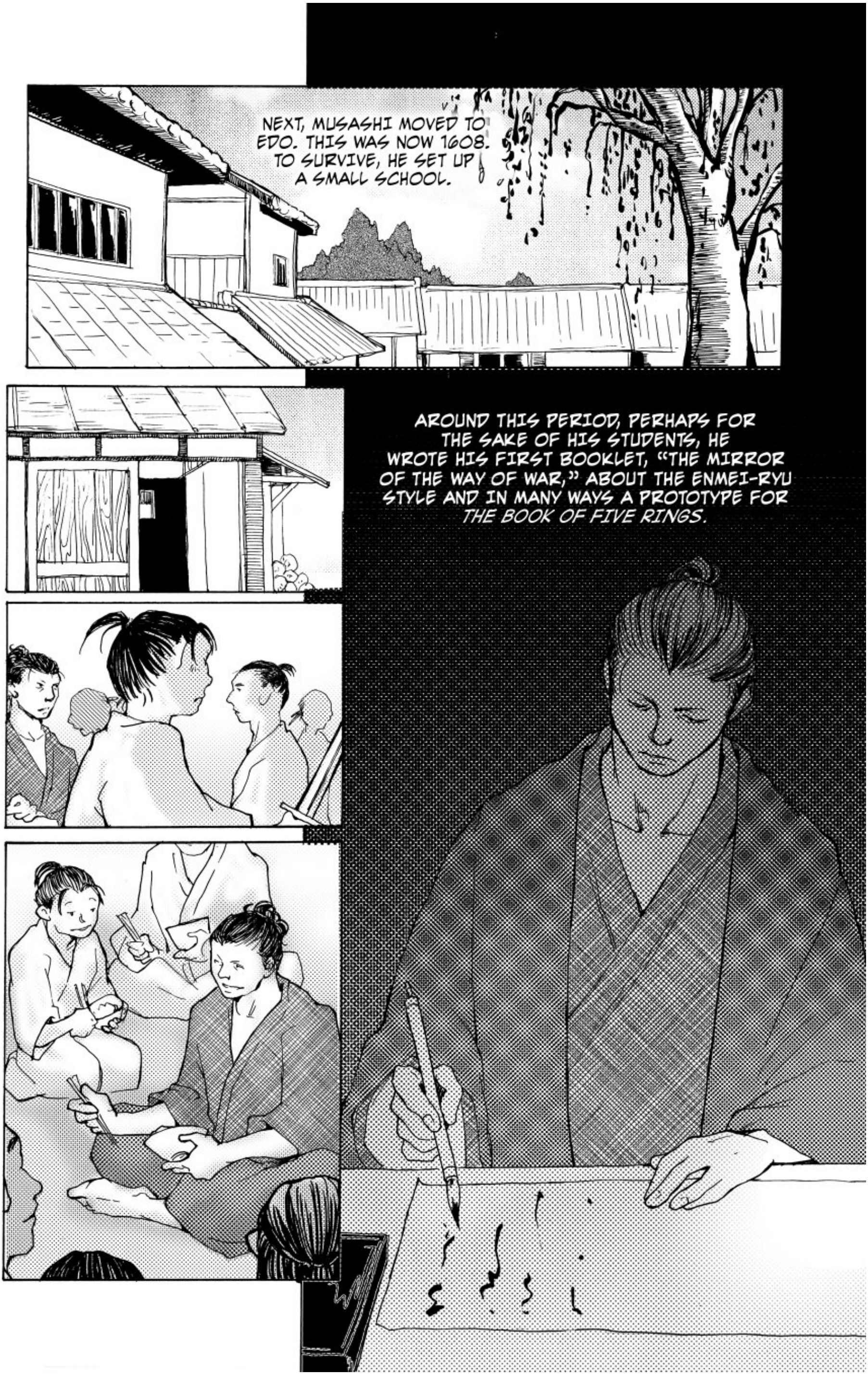

AFTER THAT, LITTLE WAS SEEN OF MUSASHI FOR ABOUT THREE YEARS. EVEN I DON'T KNOW MUCH ABOUT THAT TIME.
HIS FAME WAS SPREADING, BUT HIS PRESENCE WAS NOTABLY INTERMITTENT.
BUT I PRESUME THESE "LOST YEARS" WERE NOT WASTED. HE MAY HAVE SPENT THEM IN LEARNING ABOUT THE LAND AND NATURE...
OR THE GOODS AND CULTURES OF THE MANY PROVINCES HE TRAVELED IN.
THERE WERE NO MATCHES DURING THAT MYSTERIOUS TIME?
OH, I THINK THERE MAY HAVE BEEN MANY, BUT NONE THAT HAVE BEEN DOCUMENTED.

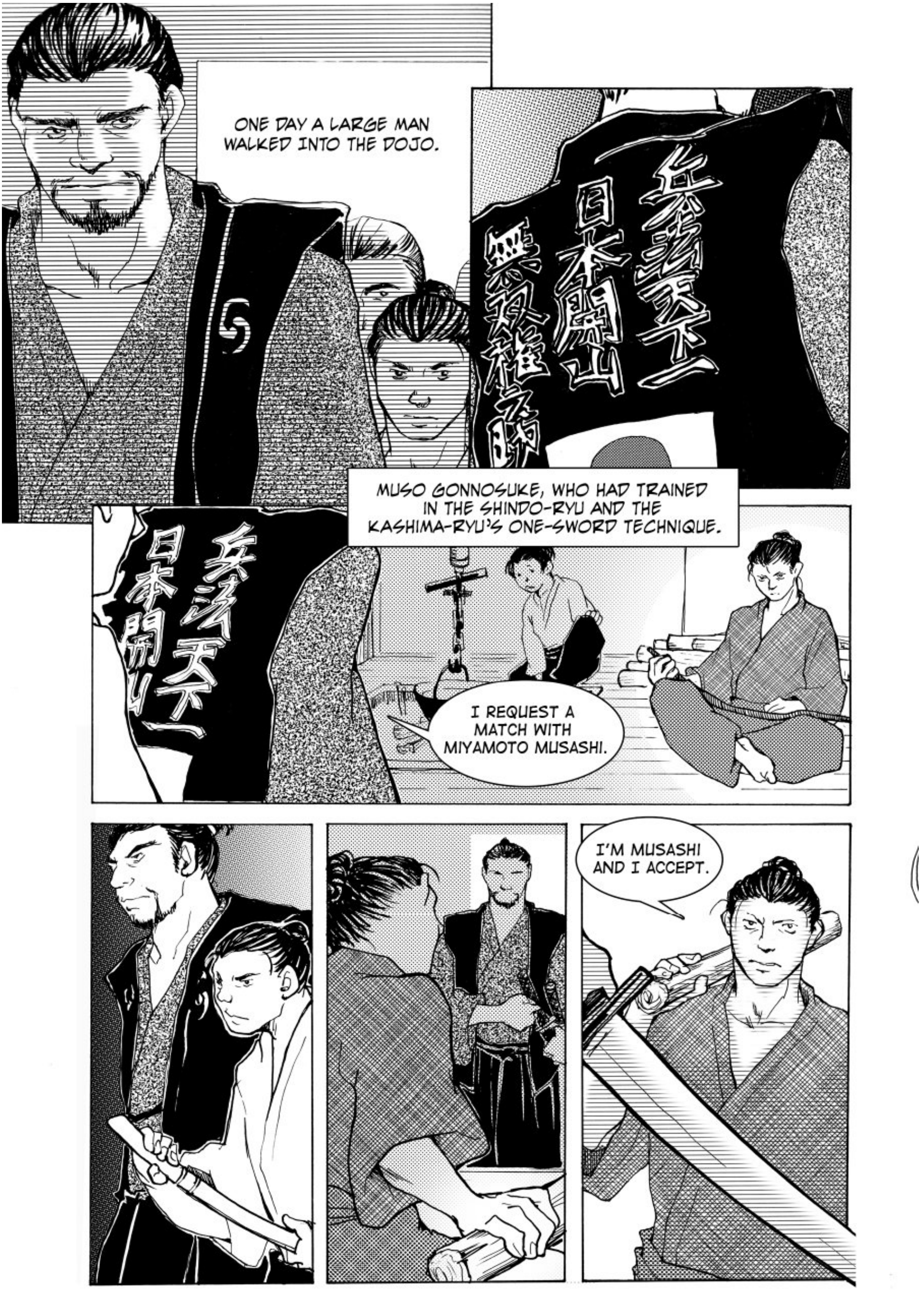

WITH NO INCOME DURING THOSE TIMES, HE WOULD PAY FOR HIS KEEP BY WORKING IN THE FIELDS IN AREAS HE PASSED THROUGH...
OR BY WRITING LETTERS FOR THE MOSTLY ILLITERATE FARMERS OF THAT TIME.

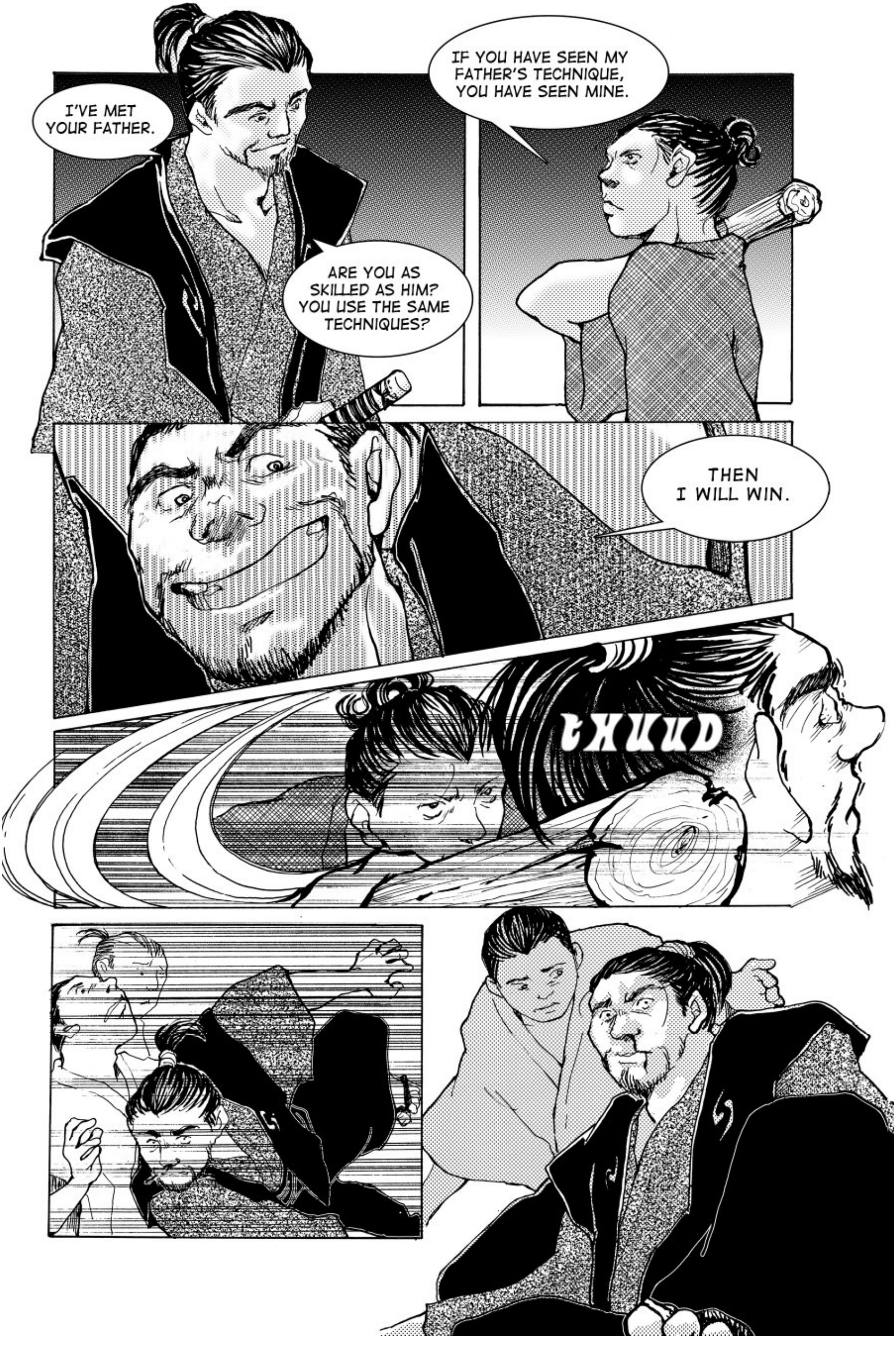

BUT BY 1607, MUSASHI WAS PASSING THROUGH THE PROVINCE OF IGA, WHEN A MATCH WAS ARRANGED WITH A MAN WE KNOW ONLY AS SHISHIDO. HE WAS A FARMER WHO MADE HIS OWN WEAPONS AND SPECIALIZED IN THE USE OF THE KUSARIGAMA SICKLE AND CHAIN.
CRIKK

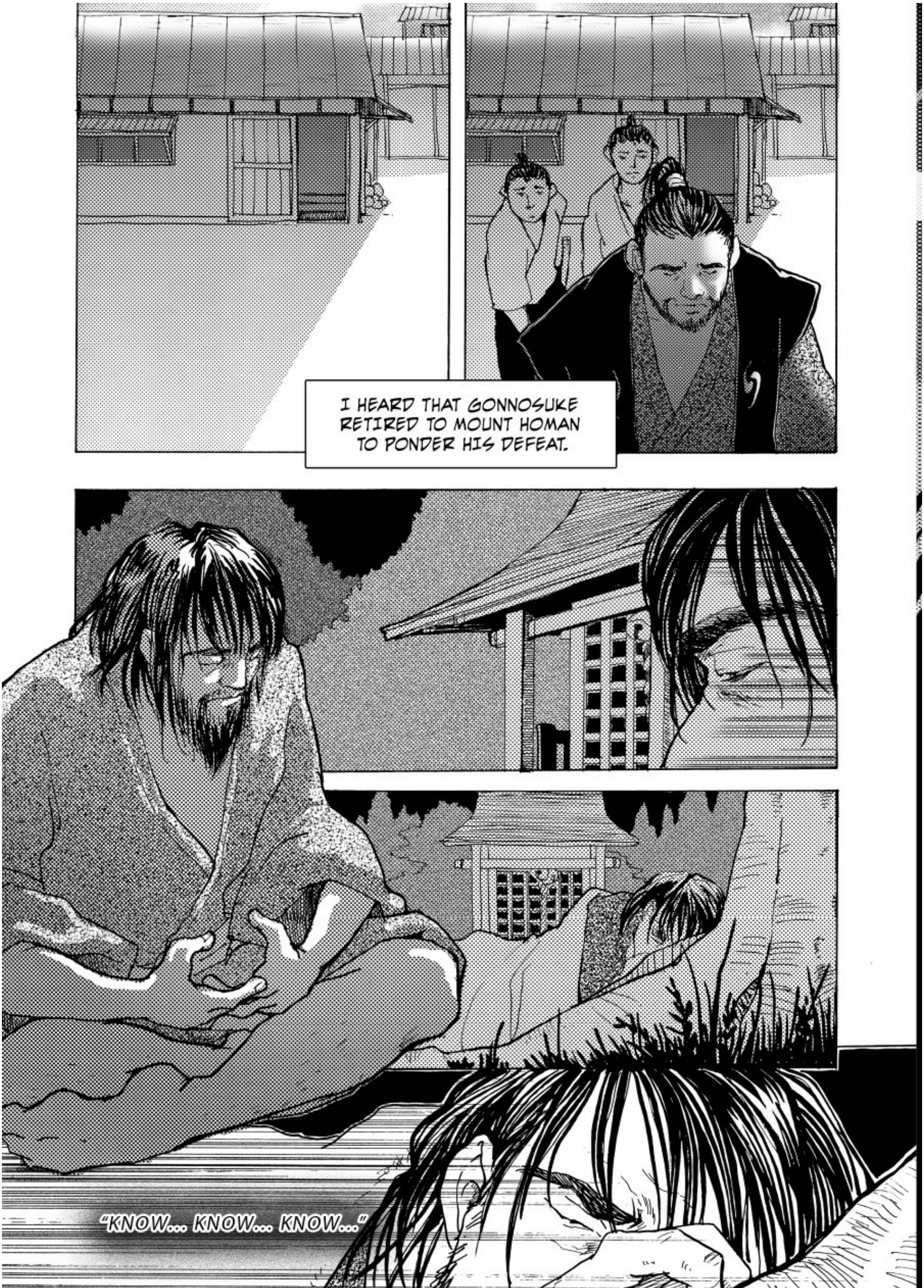

SWIISH
KICHTT
SIFF

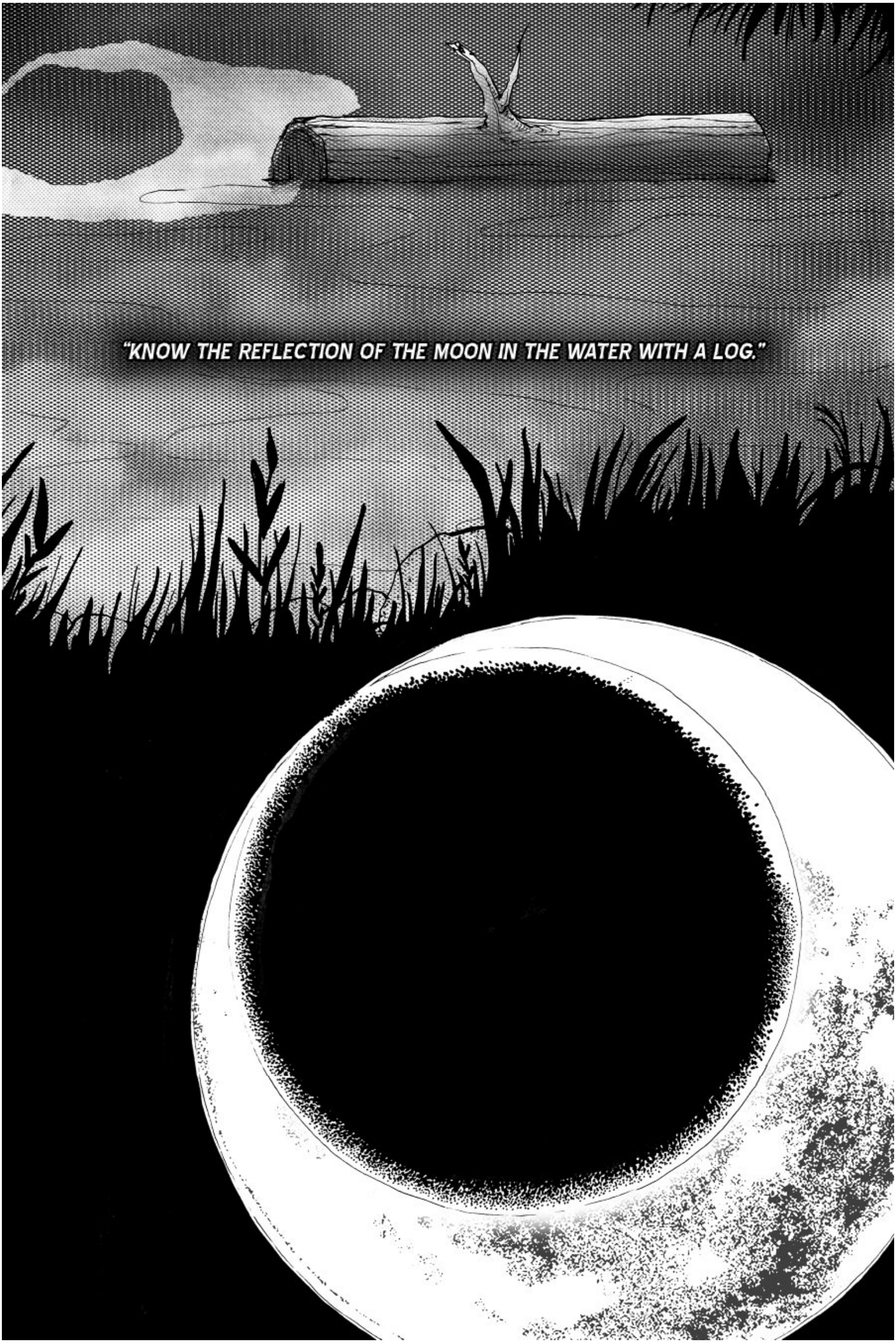

THUDD
SHRIIK
AAAHH!
NEEHHH!
YAAEEEHH!

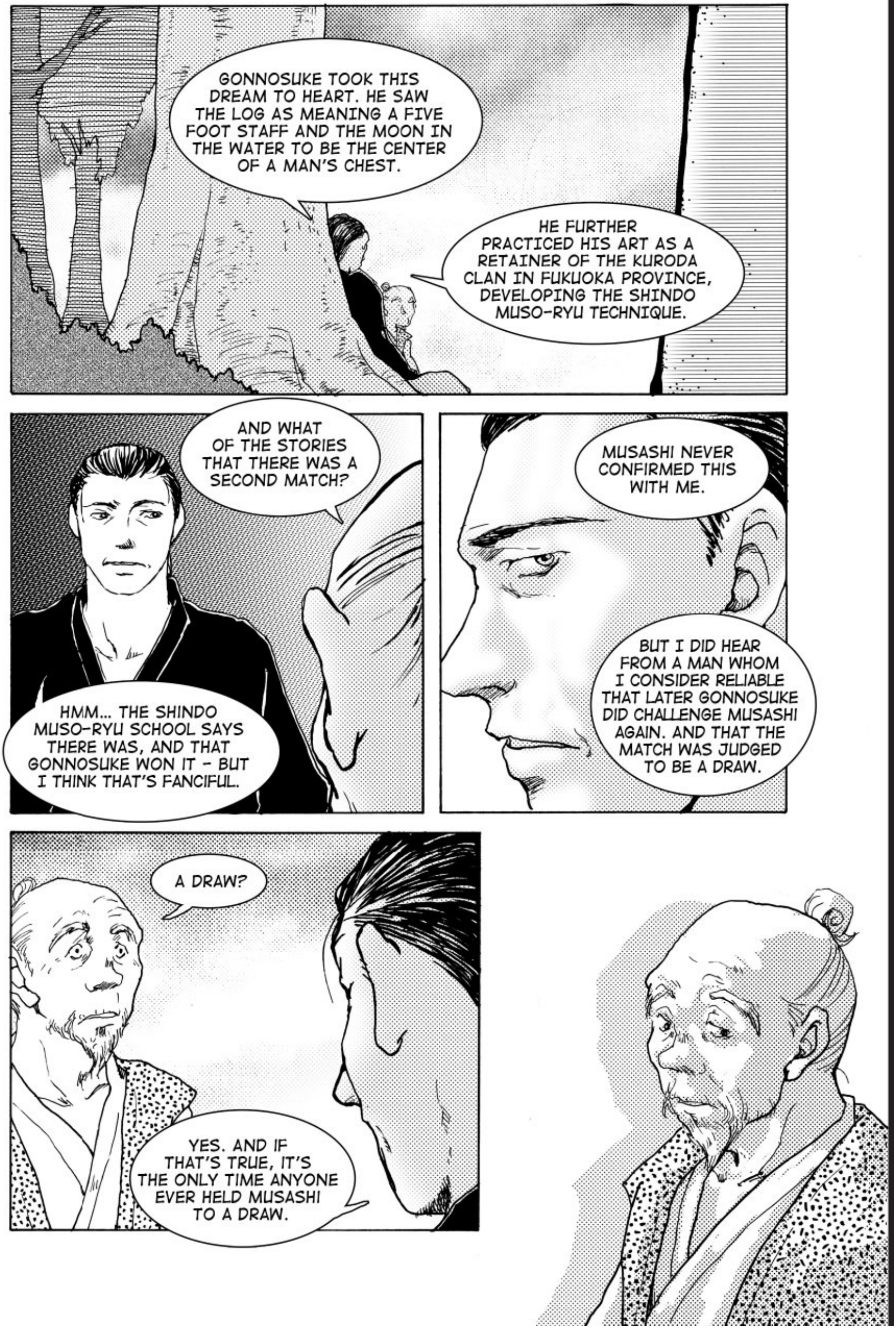

NEXT, MUSASHI MOVED TO EDO. THIS WAS NOW 1608. TO SURVIVE, HE SET UP A SMALL SCHOOL.
AROUND THIS PERIOD, PERHAPS FOR THE SAKE OF HIS STUDENTS, HE WROTE HIS FIRST BOOKLET, "THE MIRROR OF THE WAY OF WAR," ABOUT THE ENMEI-RYU STYLE AND IN MANY WAYS A PROTOTYPE FOR *THE BOOK OF FIVE RINGS.*

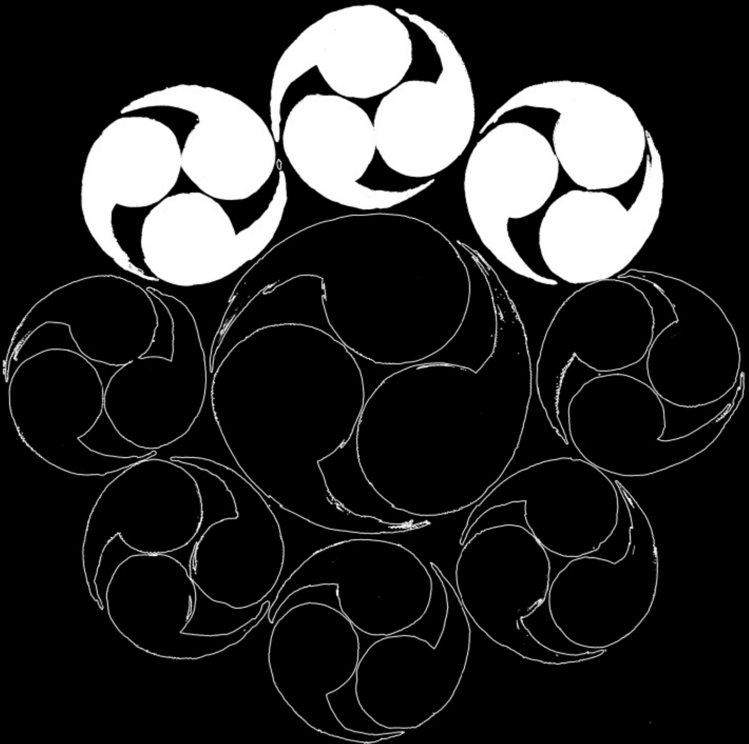

ONE DAY A LARGE MAN WALKED INTO THE DOJO.
兵法天下一
日本開山
MUSO GONNOSUKE, WHO HAD TRAINED IN THE SHINDO-RYU AND THE KASHIMA-RYU'S ONE-SWORD TECHNIQUE.
兵法天下一
日本開山
I REQUEST A MATCH WITH MIYAMOTO MUSASHI.
I'M MUSASHI AND I ACCEPT.

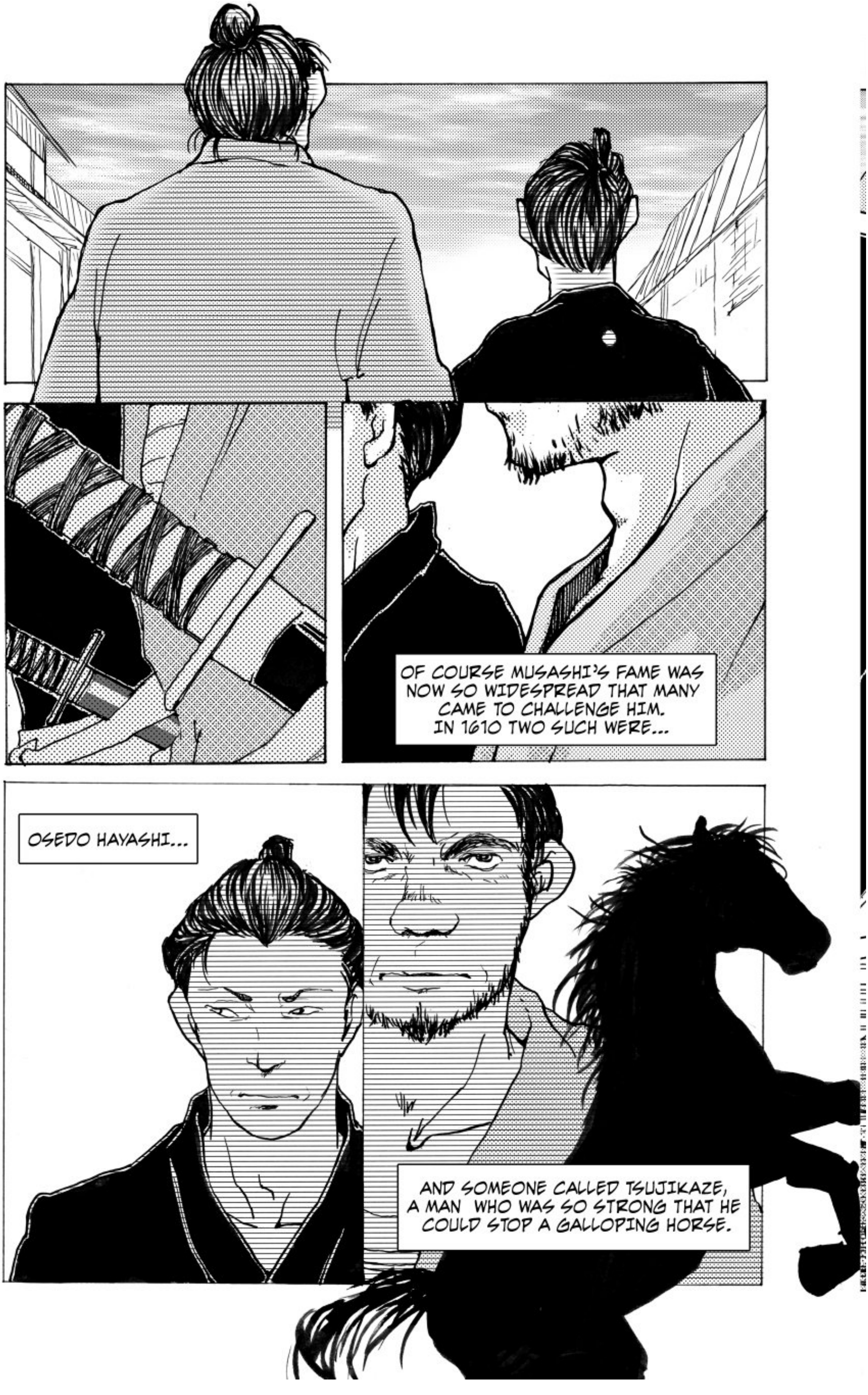

I'VE MET YOUR FATHER.
IF YOU HAVE SEEN MY FATHER'S TECHNIQUE, YOU HAVE SEEN MINE.
ARE YOU AS SKILLED AS HIM? YOU USE THE SAME TECHNIQUES?
THEN I WILL WIN.
THUUD

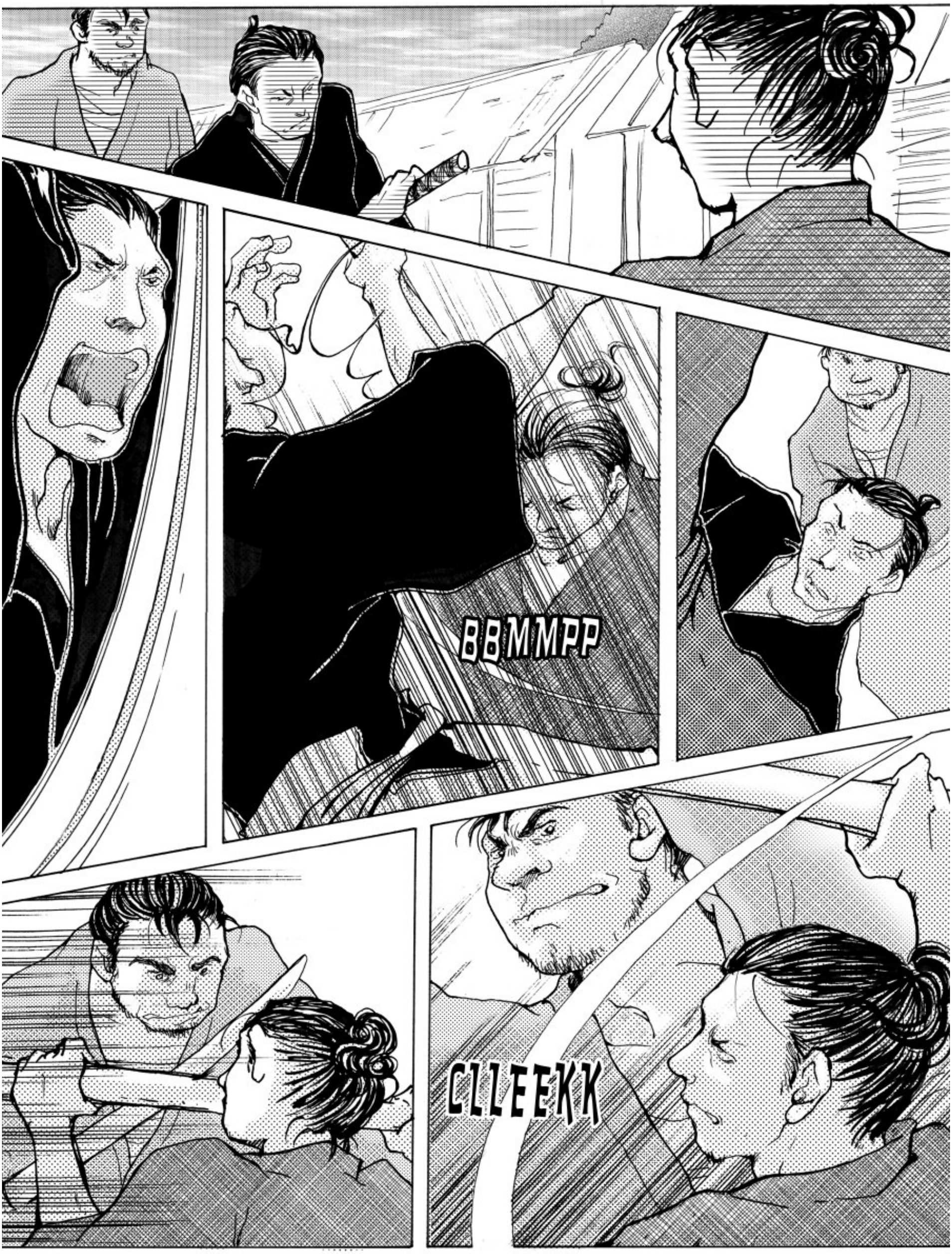

I HEARD THAT GONNOSUKE RETIRED TO MOUNT HOMAN TO PONDER HIS DEFEAT.
"KNOW... KNOW... KNOW..."

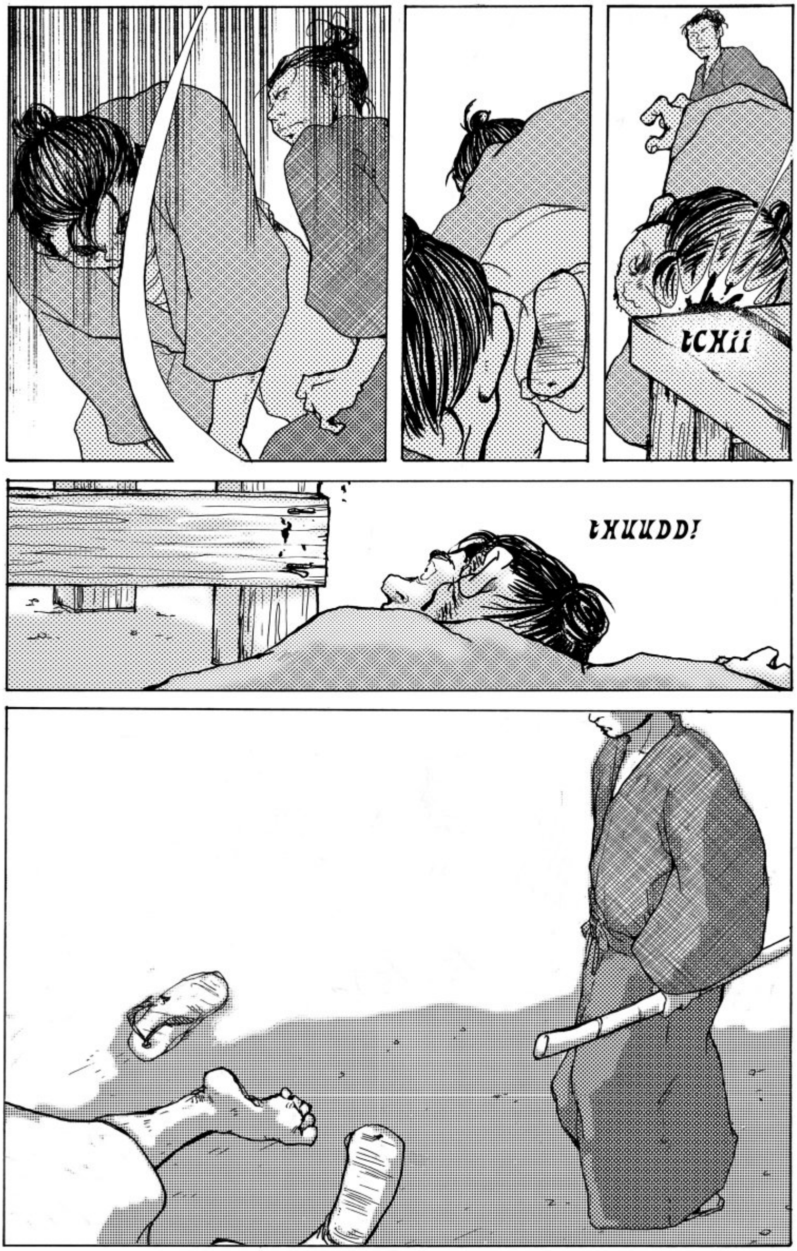

"KNOW THE REFLECTION OF THE MOON IN THE WATER WITH A LOG."


GONNOSUKE TOOK THIS DREAM TO HEART. HE SAW THE LOG AS MEANING A FIVE FOOT STAFF AND THE MOON IN THE WATER TO BE THE CENTER OF A MAN'S CHEST.
HE FURTHER PRACTICED HIS ART AS A RETAINER OF THE KURODA CLAN IN FUKUOKA PROVINCE, DEVELOPING THE SHINDO MUSO-RYU TECHNIQUE.
AND WHAT OF THE STORIES THAT THERE WAS A SECOND MATCH?
HMM... THE SHINDO MUSO-RYU SCHOOL SAYS THERE WAS, AND THAT GONNOSUKE WON IT - BUT I THINK THAT'S FANCIFUL.
MUSASHI NEVER CONFIRMED THIS WITH ME.
BUT I DID HEAR FROM A MAN WHOM I CONSIDER RELIABLE THAT LATER GONNOSUKE DID CHALLENGE MUSASHI AGAIN. AND THAT THE MATCH WAS JUDGED TO BE A DRAW.
A DRAW?
YES. AND IF THAT'S TRUE, IT'S THE ONLY TIME ANYONE EVER HELD MUSASHI TO A DRAW.



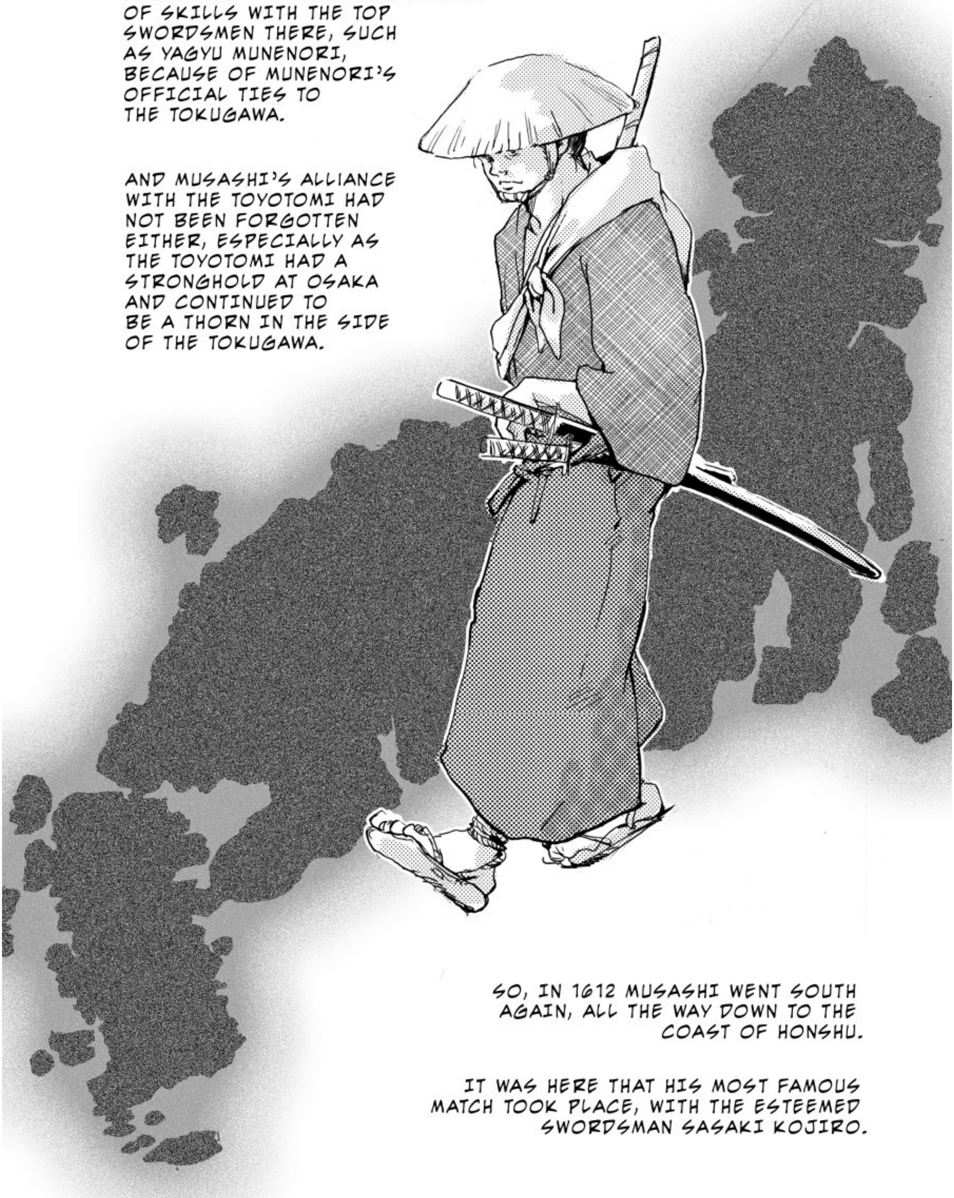

OF COURSE MUSASHI'S FAME WAS NOW SO WIDESPREAD THAT MANY CAME TO CHALLENGE HIM. IN 1610 TWO SUCH WERE...
OSEDO HAYASHI...
AND SOMEONE CALLED TSUJIKAZE, A MAN WHO WAS SO STRONG THAT HE COULD STOP A GALLOPING HORSE.


BBMMPP
CLLEEKK


tCHii
tHUUDD!

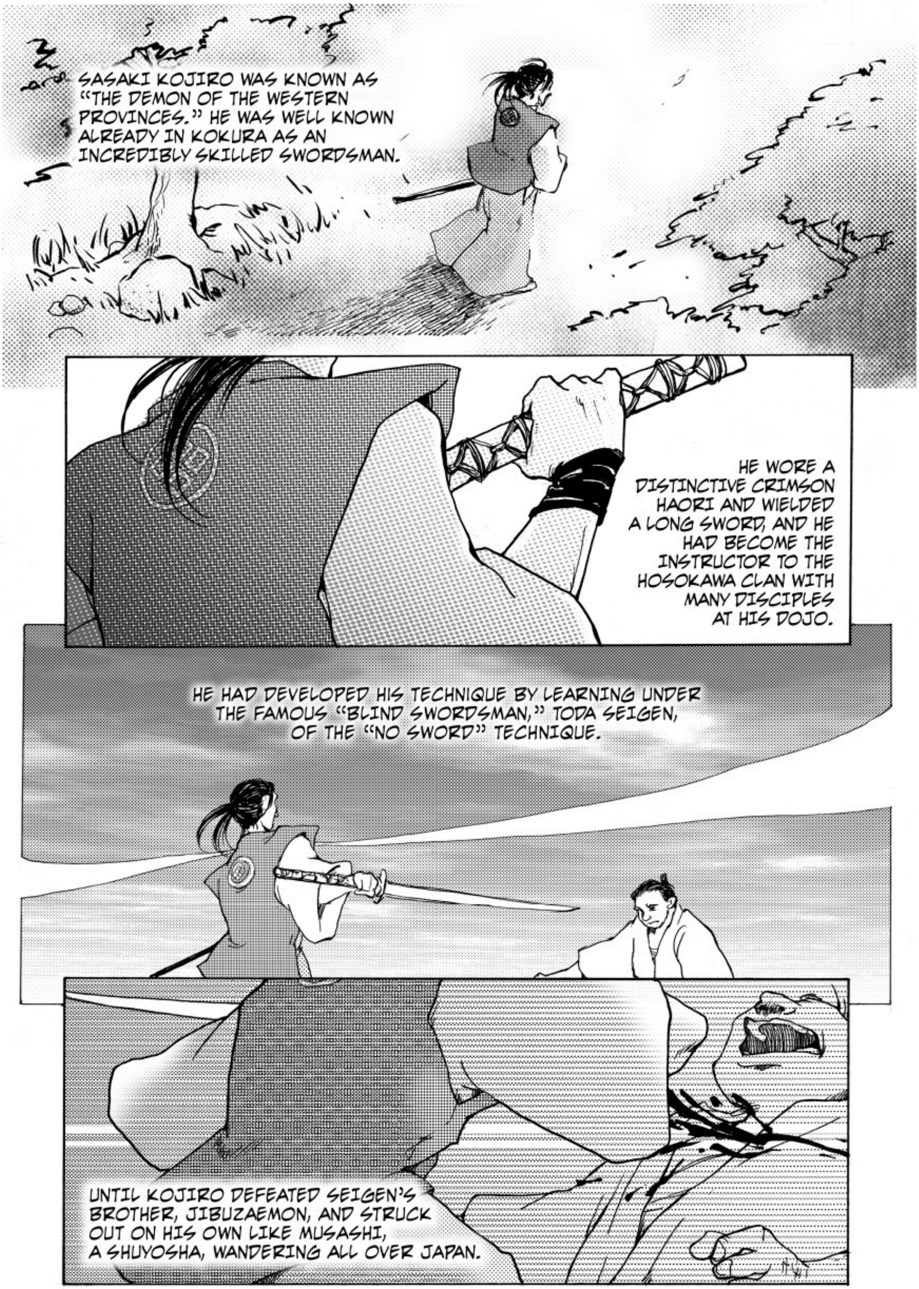
BUT MUSASHI EVENTUALLY FOUND THE SITUATION IN EDO WAS TOO RESTRICTIVE. HE WAS EFFECTIVELY PREVENTED FROM A COMPARISON OF SKILLS WITH THE TOP SWORDSMEN THERE, SUCH AS YAGYU MUNENORI, BECAUSE OF MUNENORI'S OFFICIAL TIES TO THE TOKUGAWA.

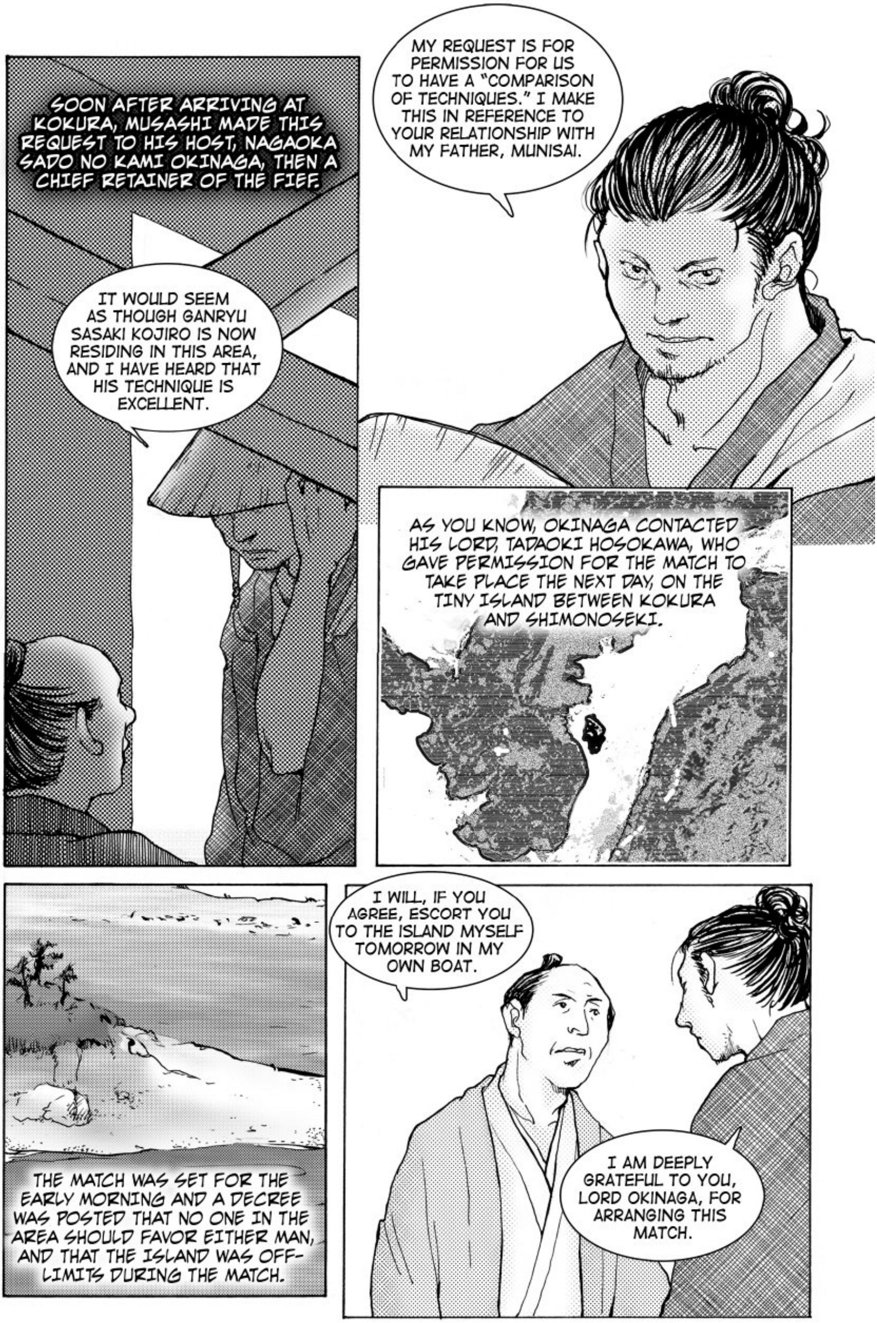
AND MUSASHI'S ALLIANCE WITH THE TOYOTOMI HAD NOT BEEN FORGOTTEN EITHER, ESPECIALLY AS THE TOYOTOMI HAD A STRONGHOLD AT OSAKA AND CONTINUED TO BE A THORN IN THE SIDE OF THE TOKUGAWA.

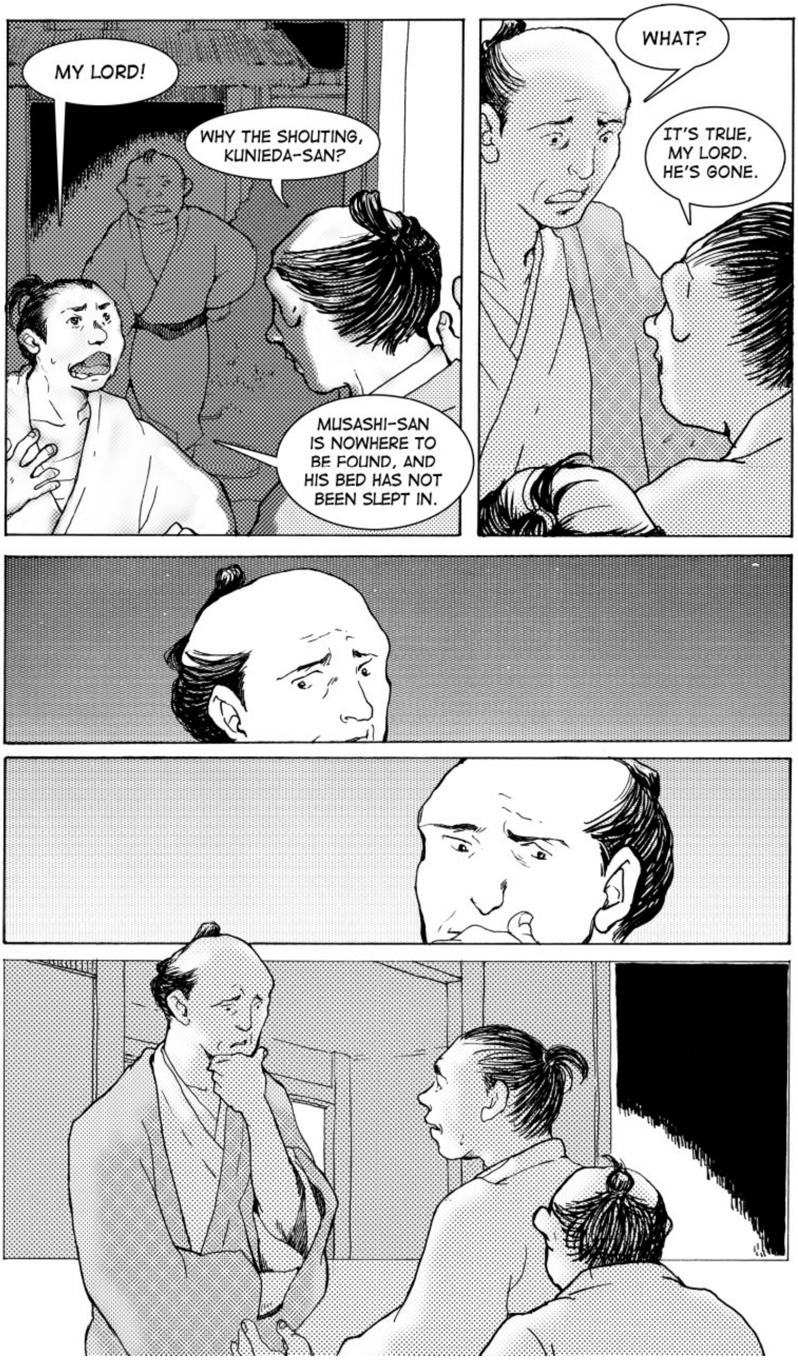


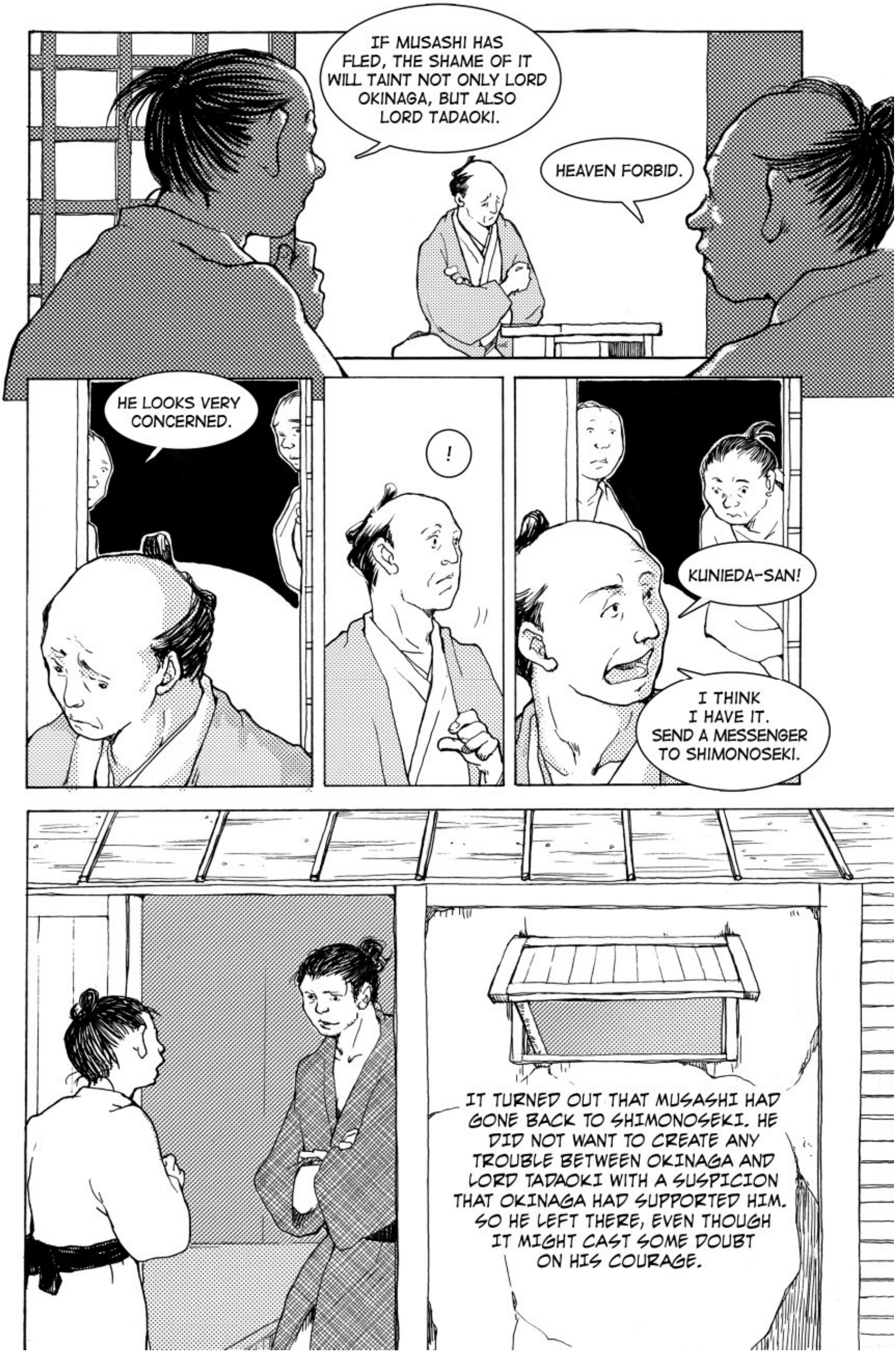
SO, IN 1612 MUSASHI WENT SOUTH AGAIN, ALL THE WAY DOWN TO THE COAST OF HONSHU.

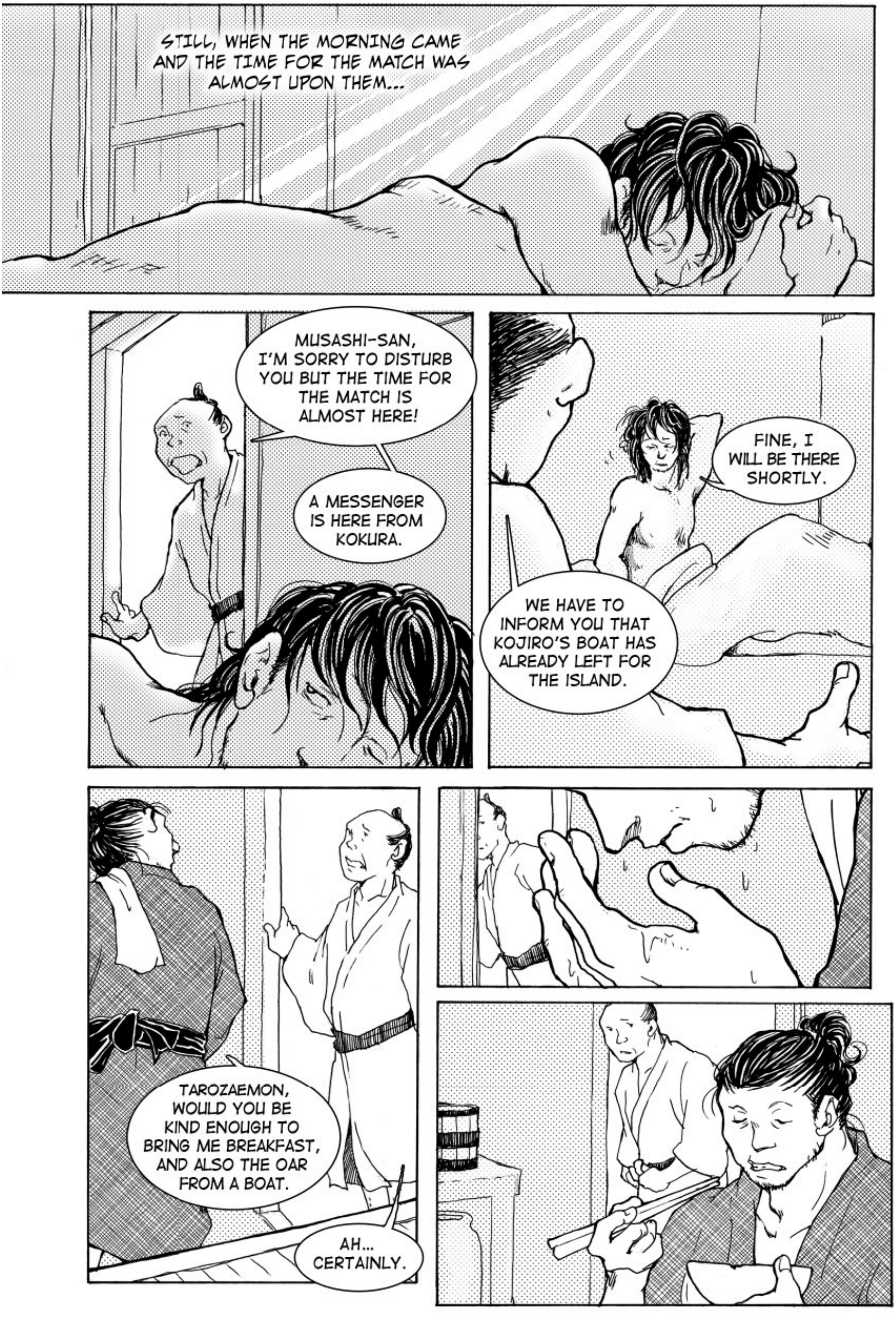
IT WAS HERE THAT HIS MOST FAMOUS MATCH TOOK PLACE, WITH THE ESTEEMED SWORDSMAN SASAKI KOJIRO.

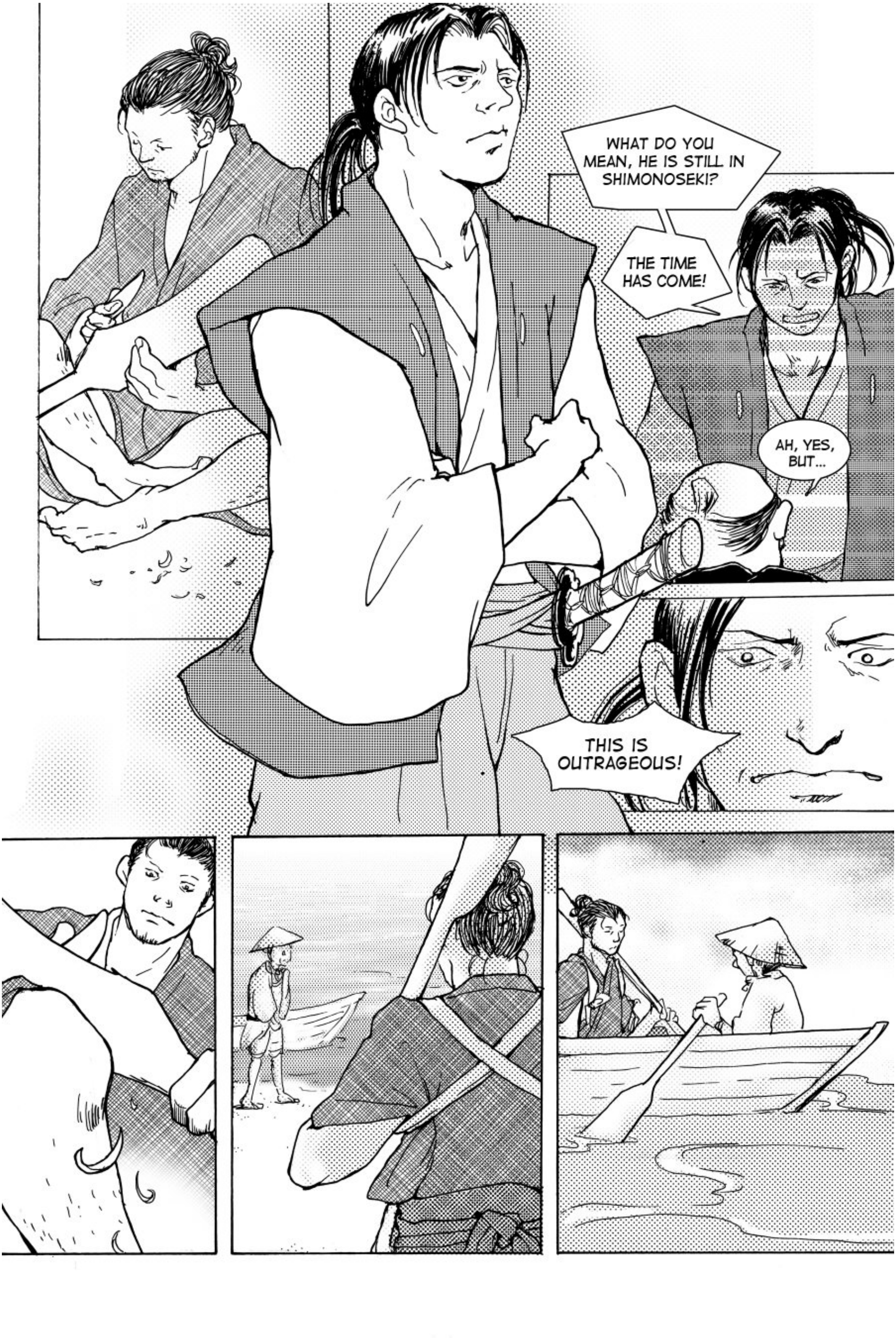

SASAKI KOJIRO WAS KNOWN AS "THE DEMON OF THE WESTERN PROVINCES." HE WAS WELL KNOWN ALREADY IN KOKURA AS AN INCREDIBLY SKILLED SWORDSMAN.
HE WORE A DISTINCTIVE CRIMSON HAORI AND WIELDED A LONG SWORD, AND HE HAD BECOME THE INSTRUCTOR TO THE HOSOKAWA CLAN WITH MANY DISCIPLES AT HIS DOJO.
HE HAD DEVELOPED HIS TECHNIQUE BY LEARNING UNDER THE FAMOUS "BLIND SWORDSMAN," TODA SEIGEN, OF THE "NO SWORD" TECHNIQUE.
UNTIL KOJIRO DEFEATED SEIGEN'S BROTHER, JIBUZAEMON, AND STRUCK OUT ON HIS OWN LIKE MUSASHI, A SHUYOSHA, WANDERING ALL OVER JAPAN.

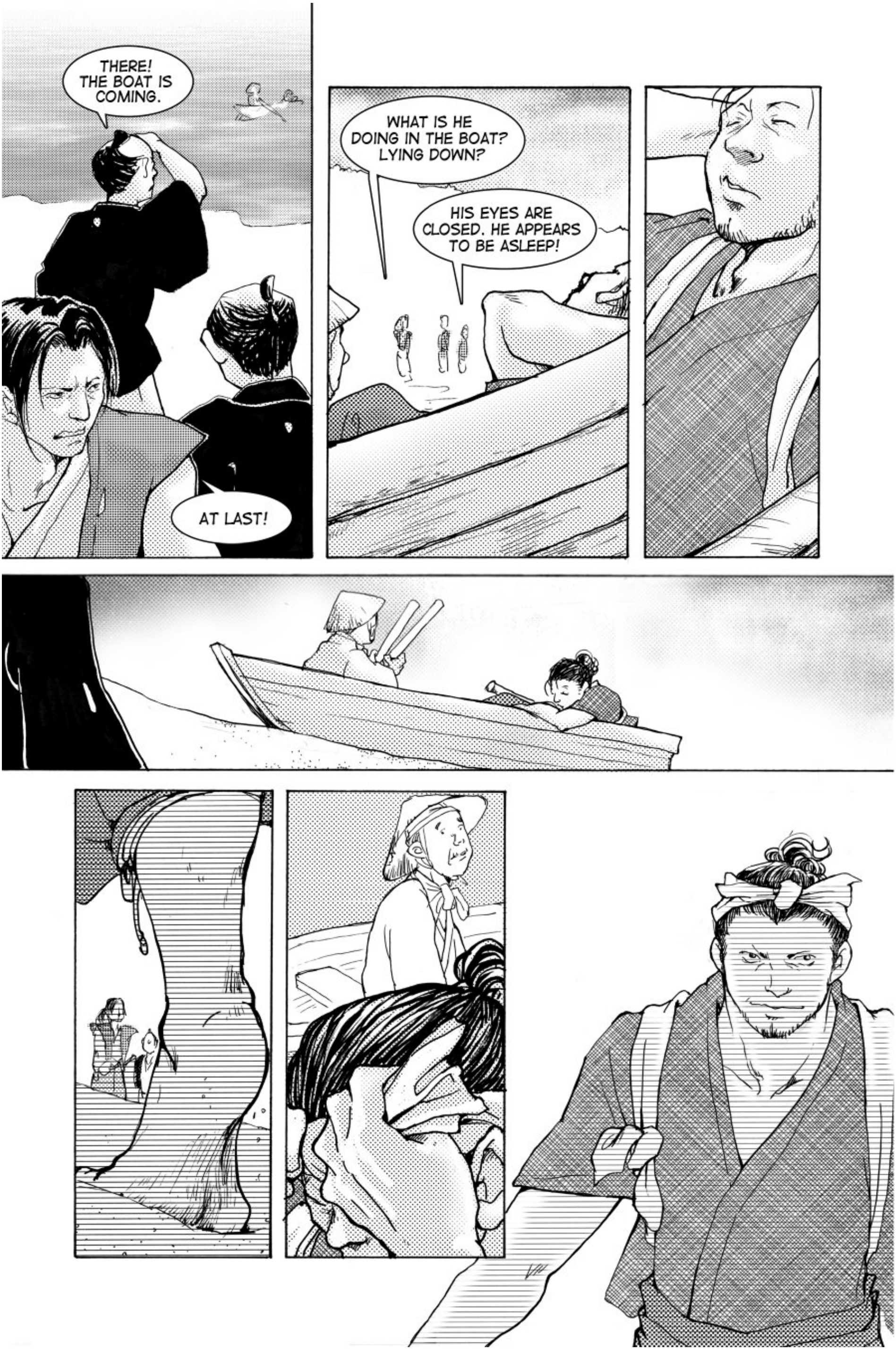

SOON AFTER ARRIVING AT KOKURA, MUSASHI MADE THIS REQUEST TO HIS HOST, NAGAOKA SADO NO KAMI OKINAGA, THEN A CHIEF RETAINER OF THE FIEF.
IT WOULD SEEM AS THOUGH GANRYU SASAKI KOJIRO IS NOW RESIDING IN THIS AREA, AND I HAVE HEARD THAT HIS TECHNIQUE IS EXCELLENT.
MY REQUEST IS FOR PERMISSION FOR US TO HAVE A "COMPARISON OF TECHNIQUES." I MAKE THIS IN REFERENCE TO YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH MY FATHER, MUNISAI.
AS YOU KNOW, OKINAGA CONTACTED HIS LORD, TADAOKI HOSOKAWA, WHO GAVE PERMISSION FOR THE MATCH TO TAKE PLACE THE NEXT DAY, ON THE TINY ISLAND BETWEEN KOKURA AND SHIMONOSEKI.
THE MATCH WAS SET FOR THE EARLY MORNING AND A DECREE WAS POSTED THAT NO ONE IN THE AREA SHOULD FAVOR EITHER MAN, AND THAT THE ISLAND WAS OFF-LIMITS DURING THE MATCH.
I WILL, IF YOU AGREE, ESCORT YOU TO THE ISLAND MYSELF TOMORROW IN MY OWN BOAT.
I AM DEEPLY GRATEFUL TO YOU, LORD OKINAGA, FOR ARRANGING THIS MATCH.

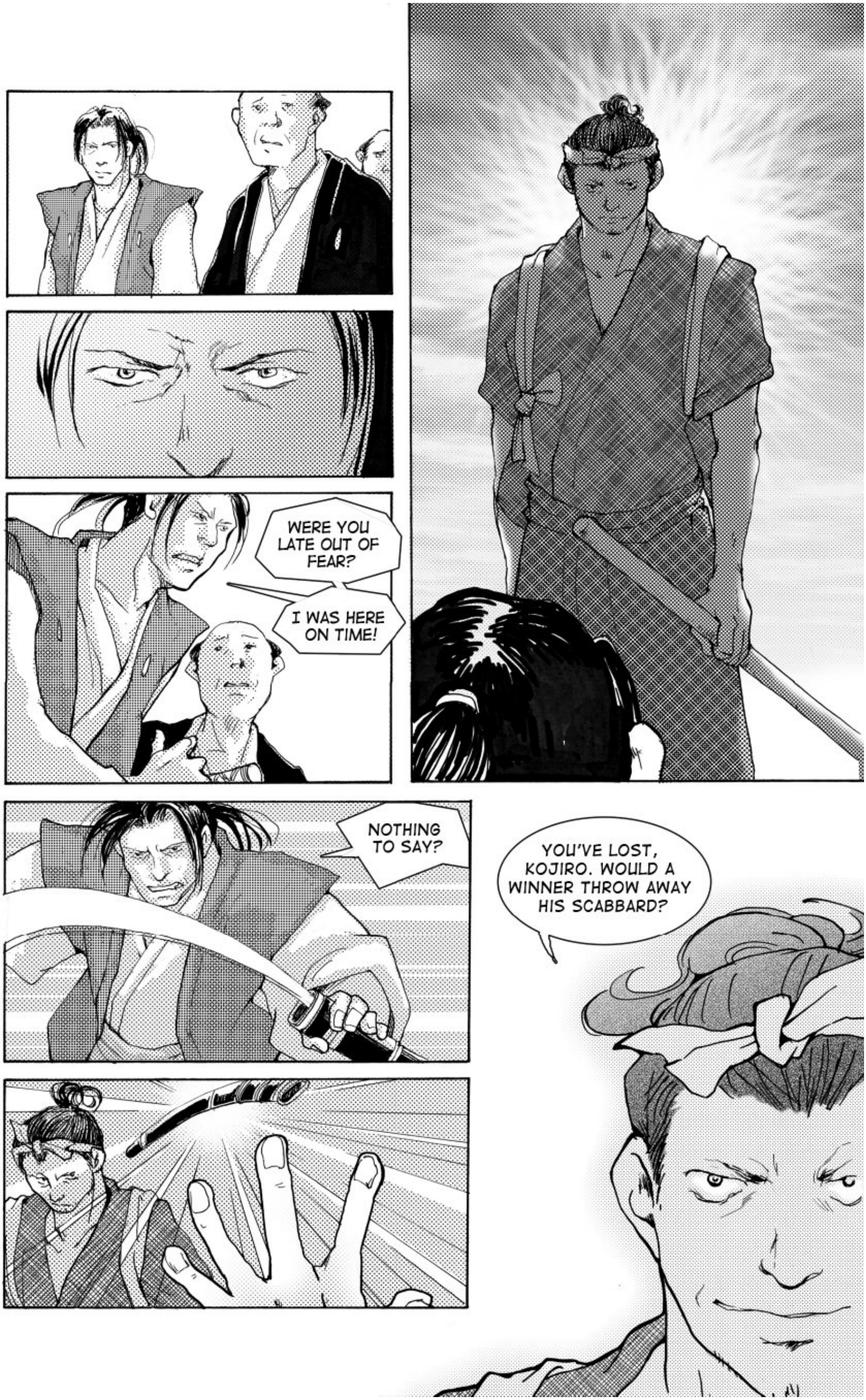

MY LORD!
WHY THE SHOUTING, KUNIEDA-SAN?
MUSASHI-SAN IS NOWHERE TO BE FOUND, AND HIS BED HAS NOT BEEN SLEPT IN.
WHAT?
IT'S TRUE, MY LORD. HE'S GONE.

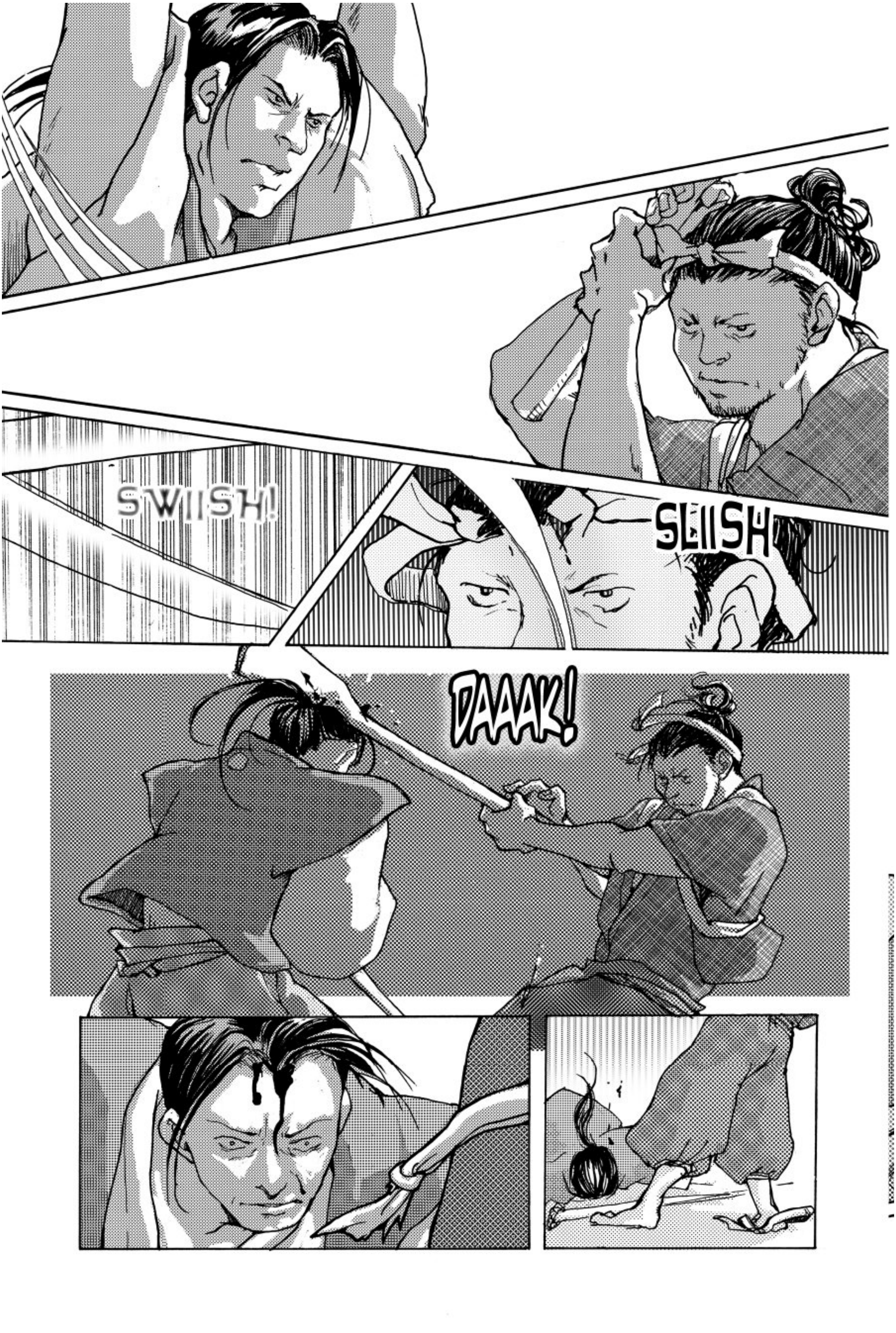

IF MUSASHI HAS FLED, THE SHAME OF IT WILL TAINT NOT ONLY LORD OKINAGA, BUT ALSO LORD TADAOKI.
HEAVEN FORBID.
HE LOOKS VERY CONCERNED.
!
KUNIEDA-SAN!
I THINK I HAVE IT. SEND A MESSENGER TO SHIMONOSEKI.
IT TURNED OUT THAT MUSASHI HAD GONE BACK TO SHIMONOSEKI. HE DID NOT WANT TO CREATE ANY TROUBLE BETWEEN OKINAGA AND LORD TADAOKI WITH A SUSPICION THAT OKINAGA HAD SUPPORTED HIM. SO HE LEFT THERE, EVEN THOUGH IT MIGHT CAST SOME DOUBT ON HIS COURAGE.

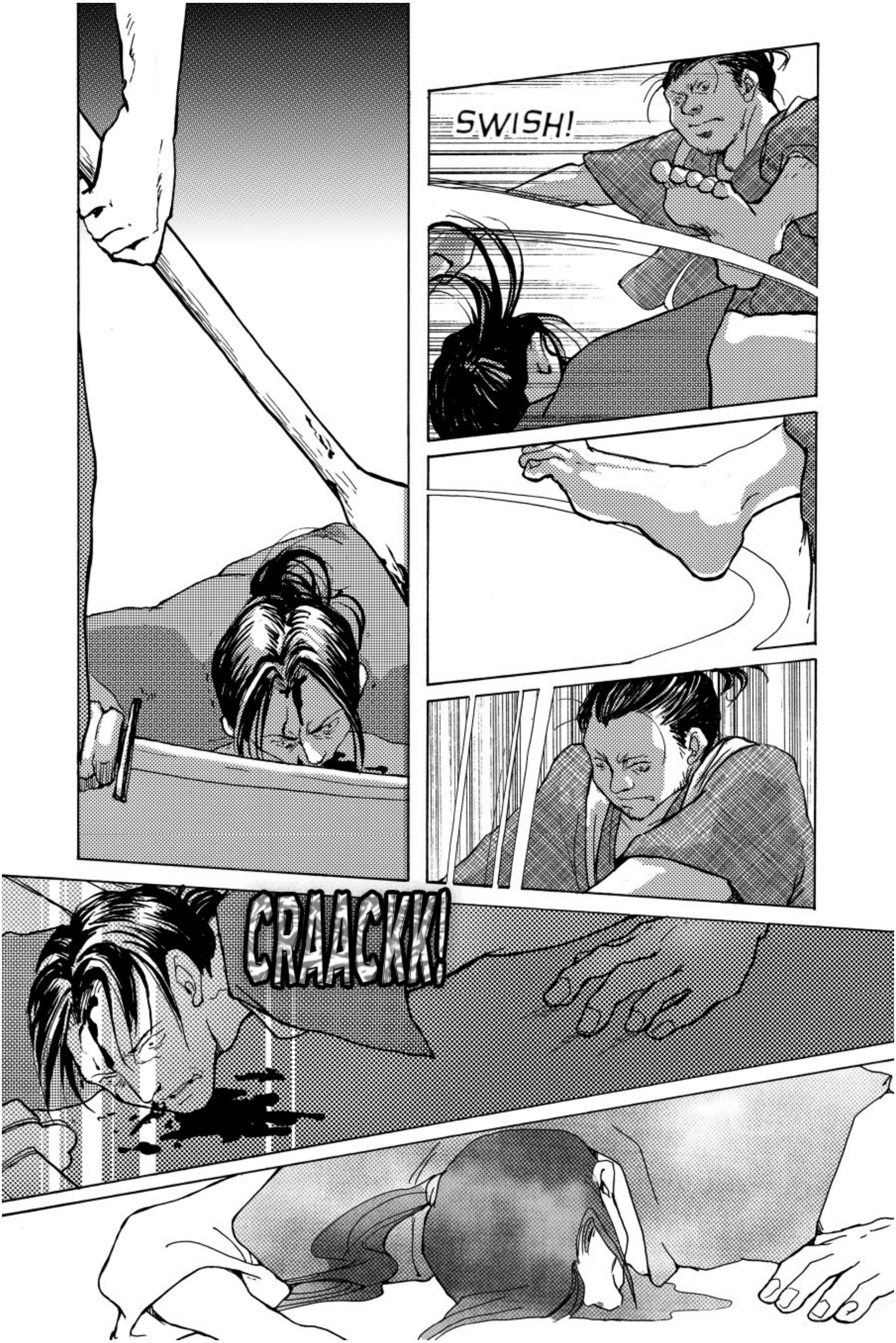

STILL, WHEN THE MORNING CAME AND THE TIME FOR THE MATCH WAS ALMOST UPON THEM...
MUSASHI-SAN, I'M SORRY TO DISTURB YOU BUT THE TIME FOR THE MATCH IS ALMOST HERE!
A MESSENGER IS HERE FROM KOKURA.
FINE, I WILL BE THERE SHORTLY.
WE HAVE TO INFORM YOU THAT KOJIRO'S BOAT HAS ALREADY LEFT FOR THE ISLAND.
TAROZAEMON, WOULD YOU BE KIND ENOUGH TO BRING ME BREAKFAST, AND ALSO THE OAR FROM A BOAT.
AH... CERTAINLY.

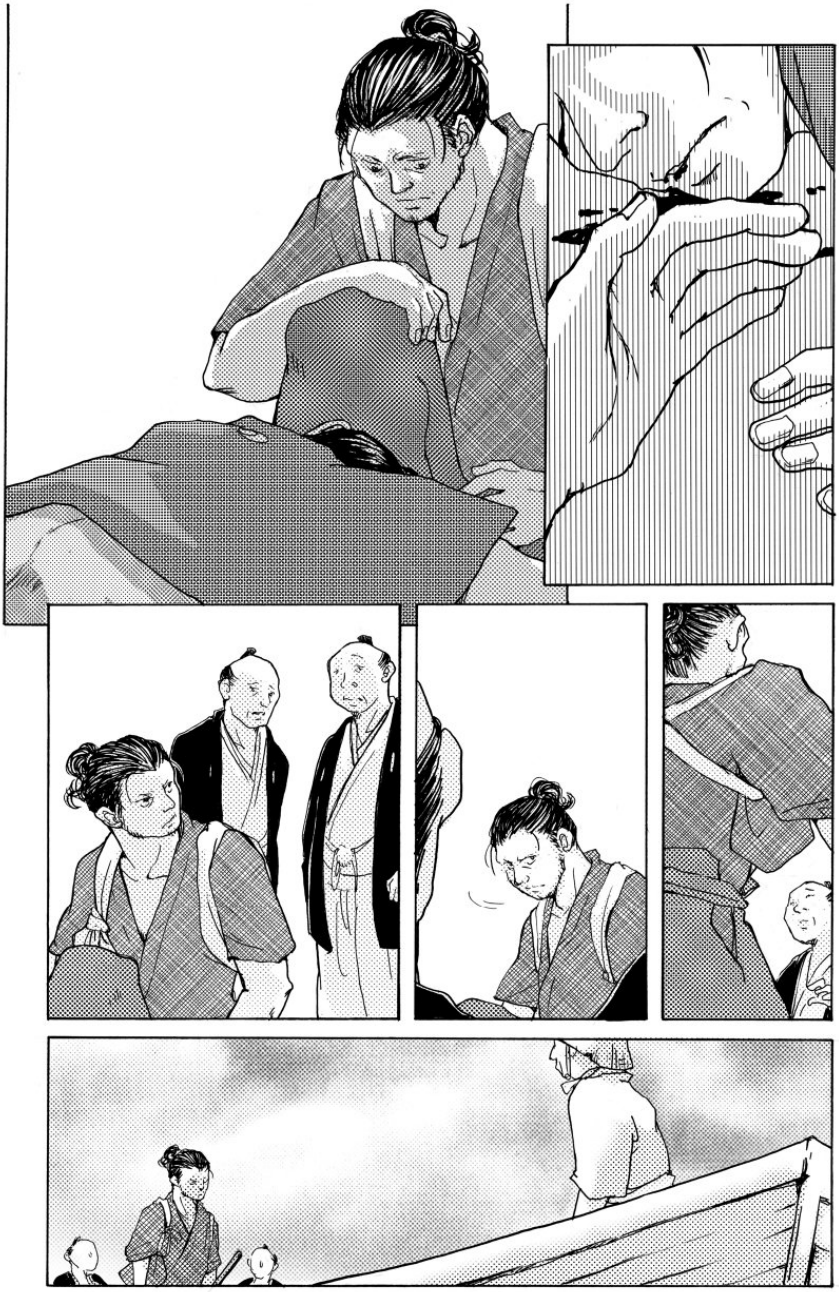

WHAT DO YOU MEAN, HE IS STILL IN SHIMONOSEKI?
THE TIME HAS COME!
AH, YES, BUT...
THIS IS OUTRAGEOUS!

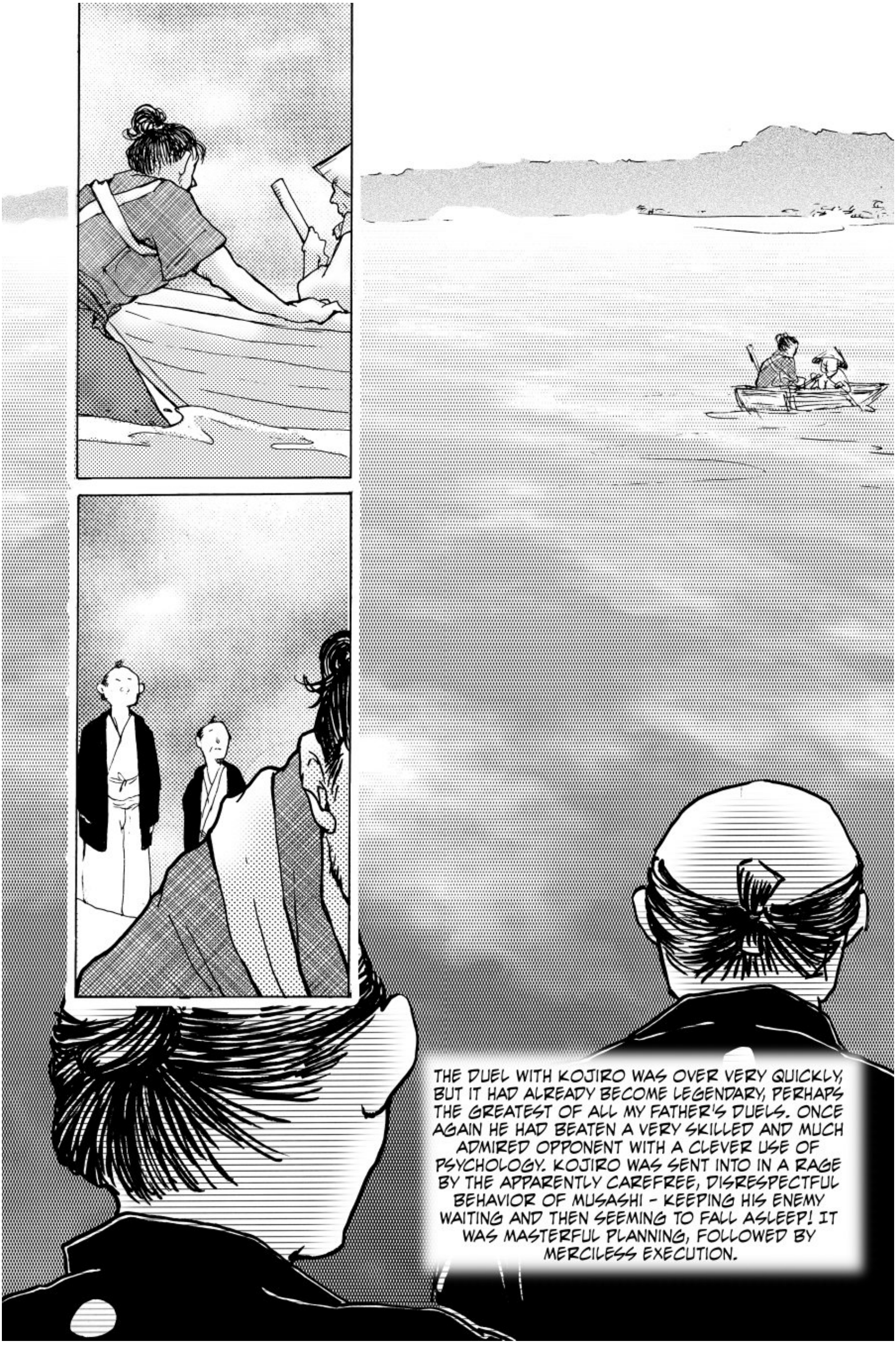

THERE! THE BOAT IS COMING.
AT LAST!
WHAT IS HE DOING IN THE BOAT? LYING DOWN?
HIS EYES ARE CLOSED. HE APPEARS TO BE ASLEEP!

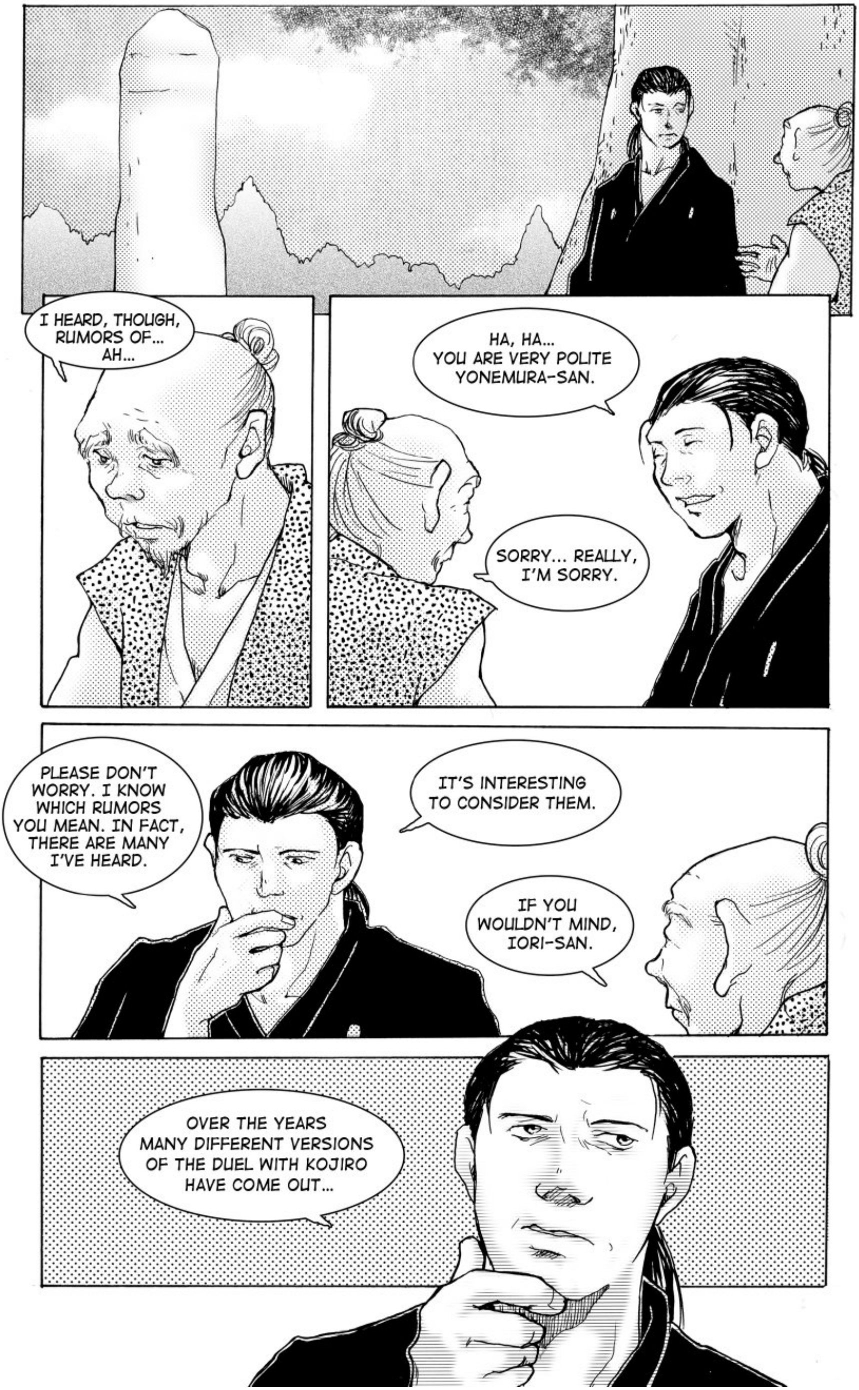

WERE YOU LATE OUT OF FEAR?
I WAS HERE ON TIME!
NOTHING TO SAY?
YOU'VE LOST, KOJIRO. WOULD A WINNER THROW AWAY HIS SCABBARD?

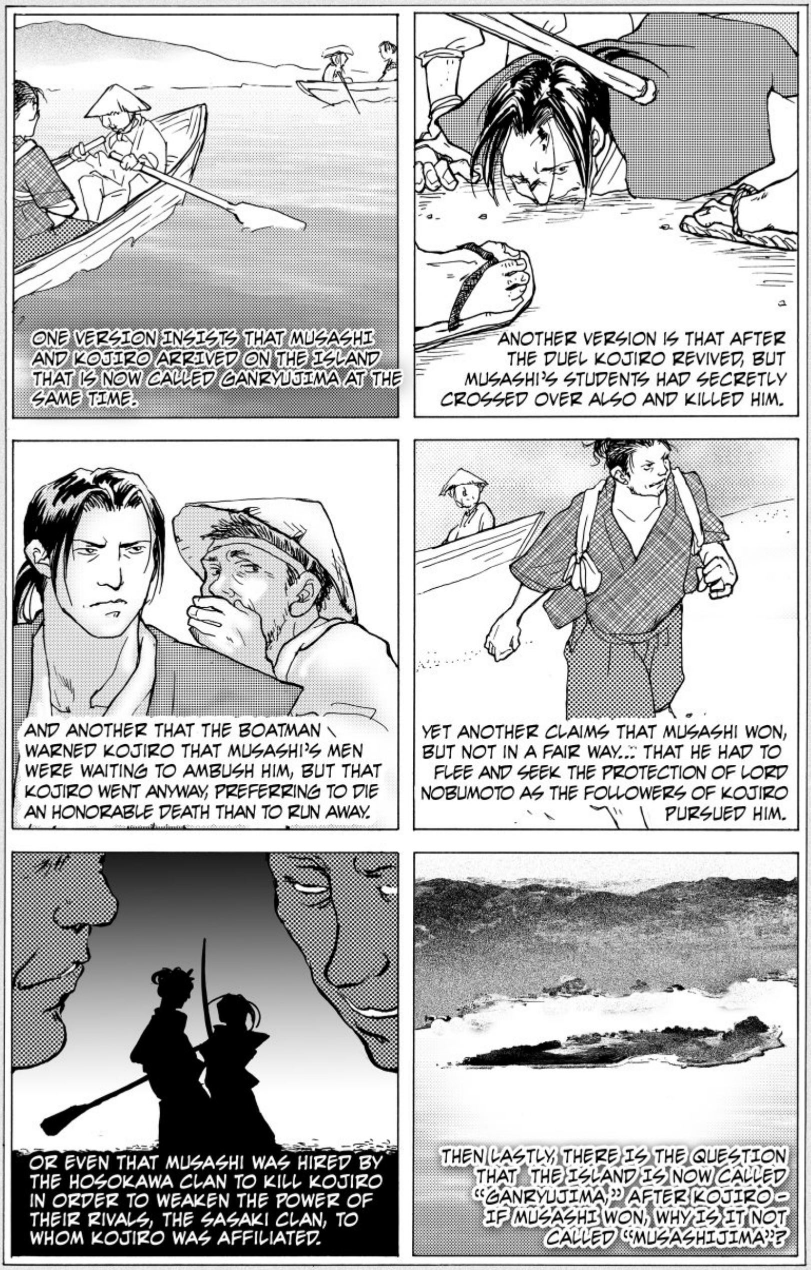

SWIISH!
SLIISH
DAAAK!

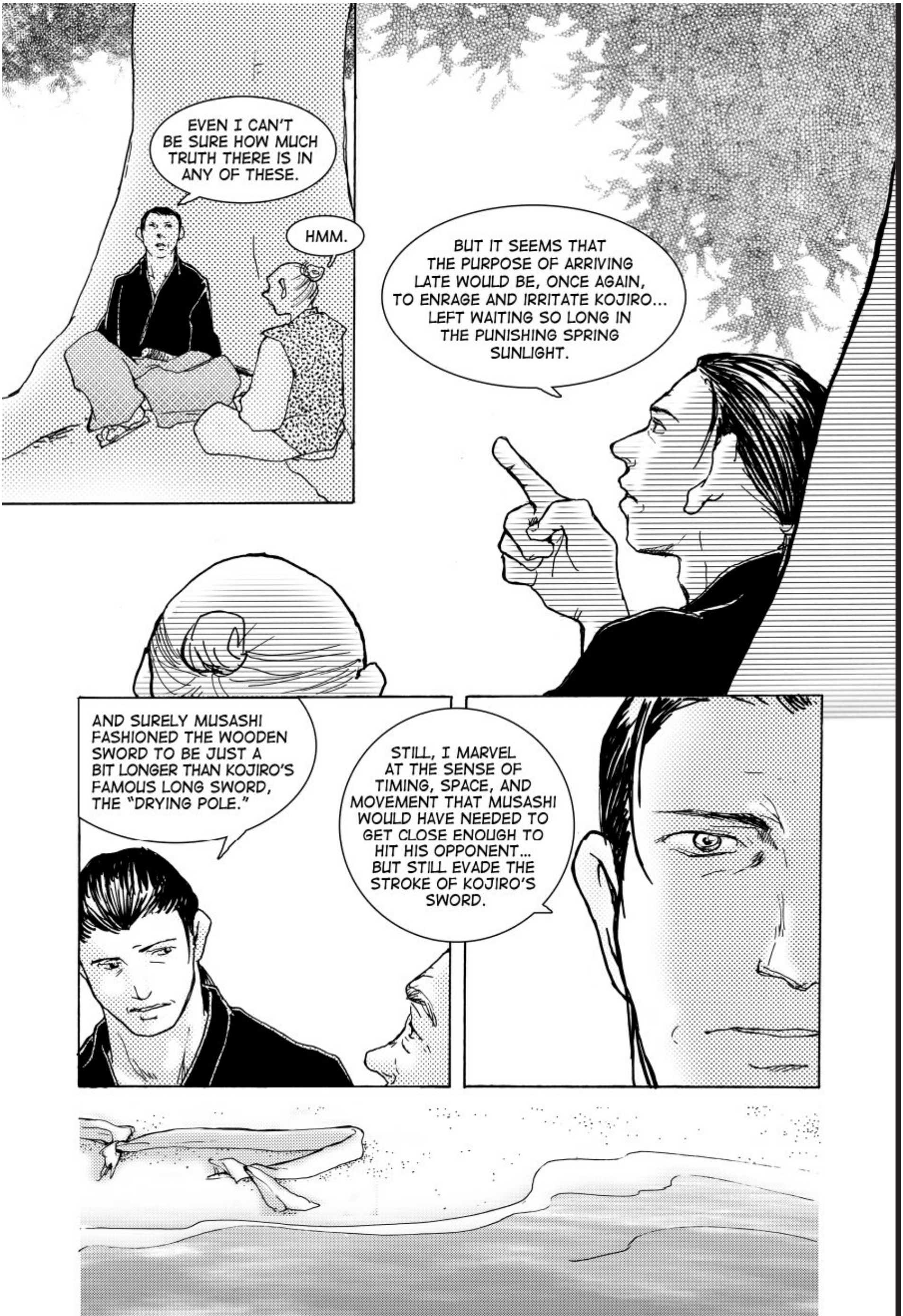

SWISH!
CRAACKK!

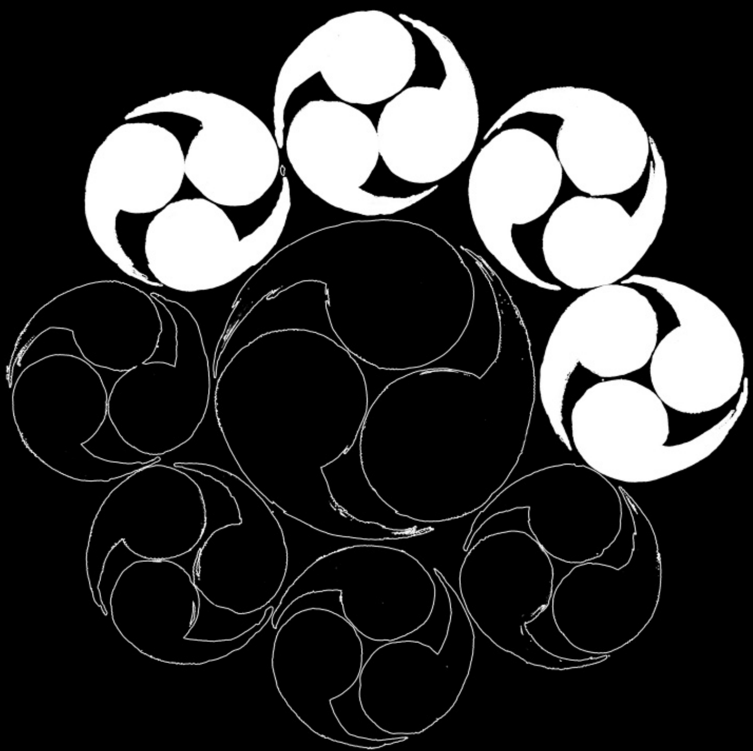


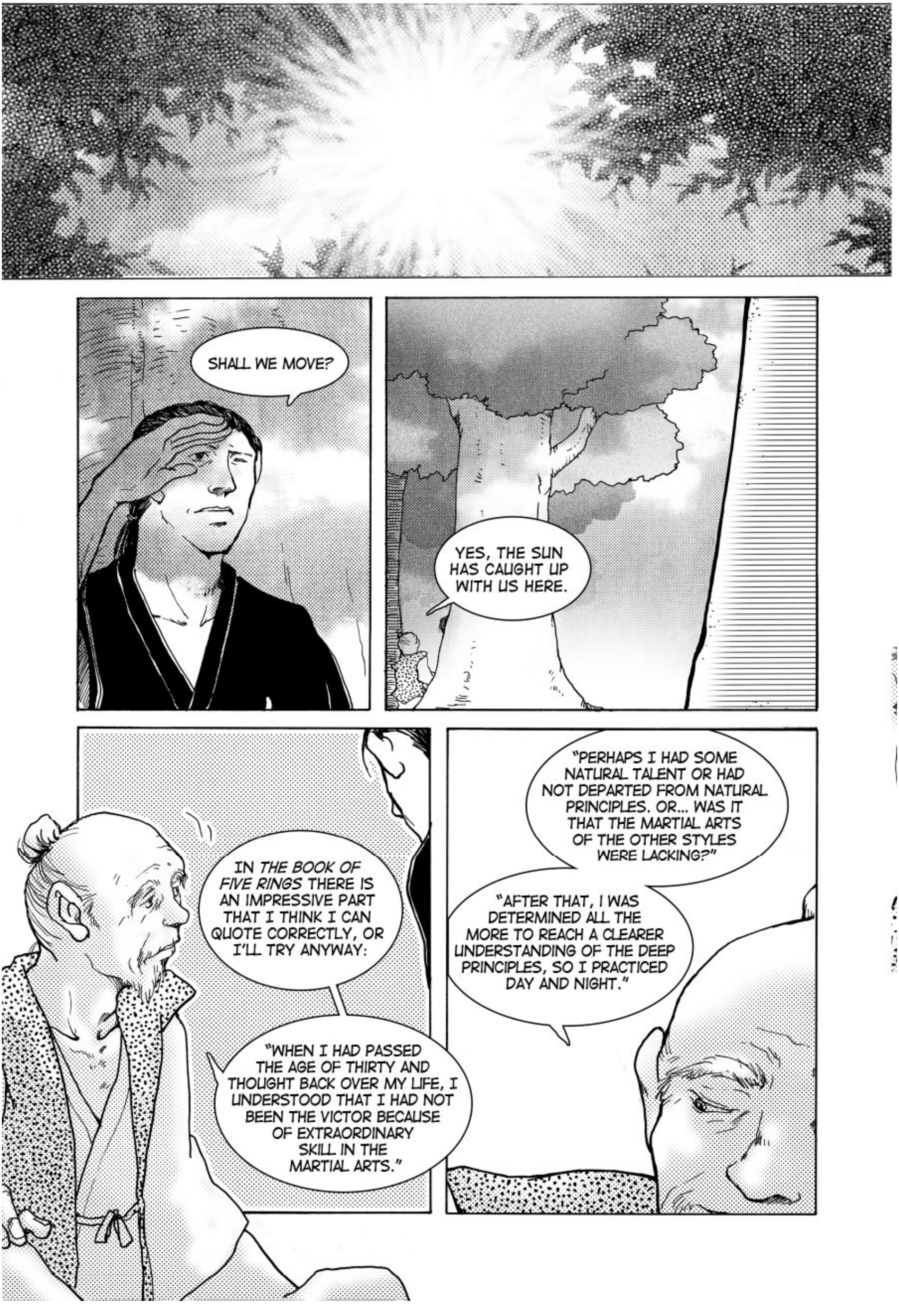

THE DUEL WITH KOJIRO WAS OVER VERY QUICKLY, BUT IT HAD ALREADY BECOME LEGENDARY, PERHAPS THE GREATEST OF ALL MY FATHER'S DUELS. ONCE AGAIN HE HAD BEATEN A VERY SKILLED AND MUCH ADMIRED OPPONENT WITH A CLEVER USE OF PSYCHOLOGY. KOJIRO WAS SENT INTO IN A RAGE BY THE APPARENTLY CAREFREE, DISRESPECTFUL BEHAVIOR OF MUSASHI - KEEPING HIS ENEMY WAITING AND THEN SEEMING TO FALL ASLEEP! IT WAS MASTERFUL PLANNING, FOLLOWED BY MERCILESS EXECUTION.

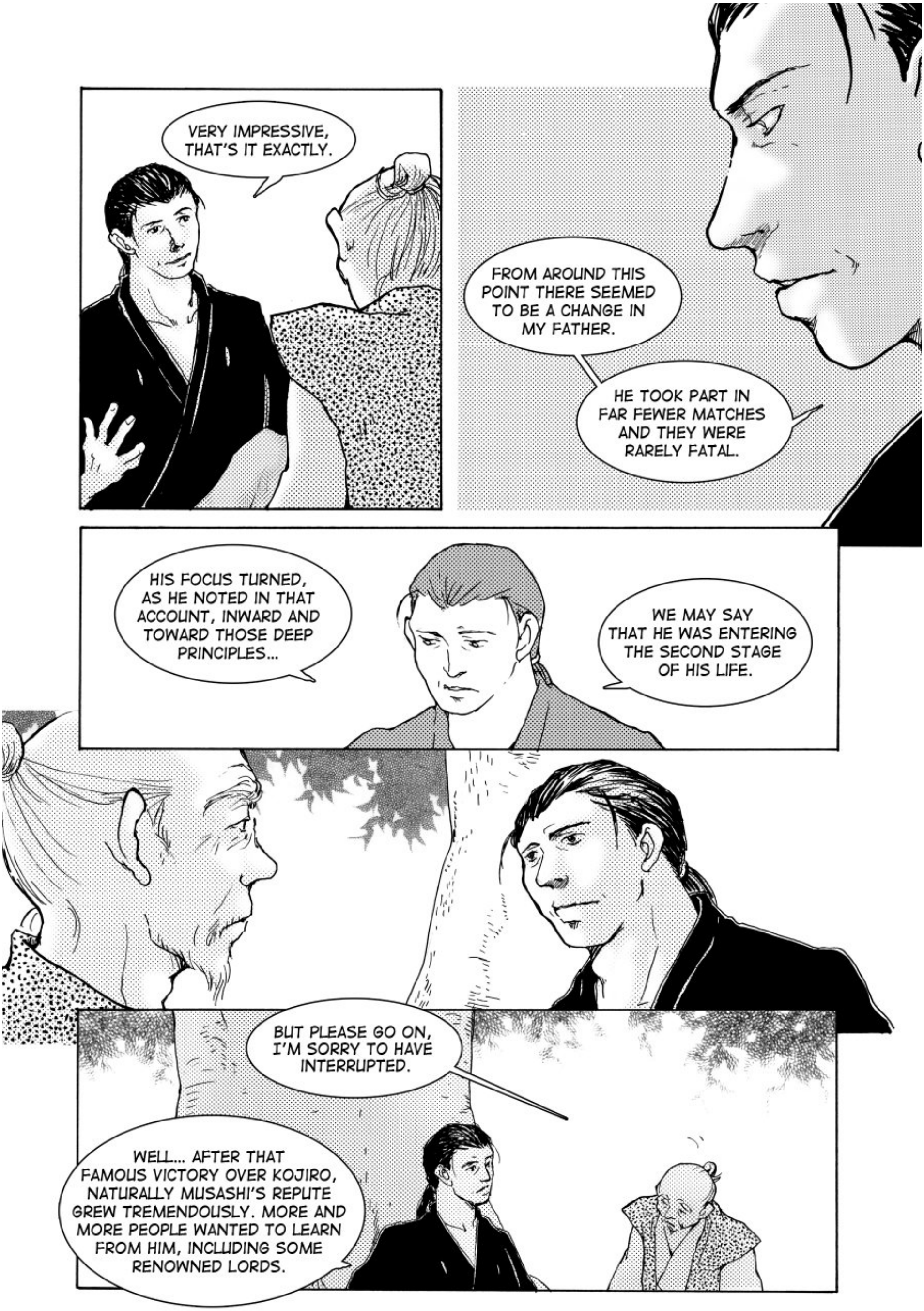

I HEARD, THOUGH, RUMORS OF... AH...
HA, HA... YOU ARE VERY POLITE YONEMURA-SAN.
SORRY... REALLY, I'M SORRY.
PLEASE DON'T WORRY. I KNOW WHICH RUMORS YOU MEAN. IN FACT, THERE ARE MANY I'VE HEARD.
IT'S INTERESTING TO CONSIDER THEM.
IF YOU WOULDN'T MIND, IORI-SAN.
OVER THE YEARS MANY DIFFERENT VERSIONS OF THE DUEL WITH KOJIRO HAVE COME OUT...

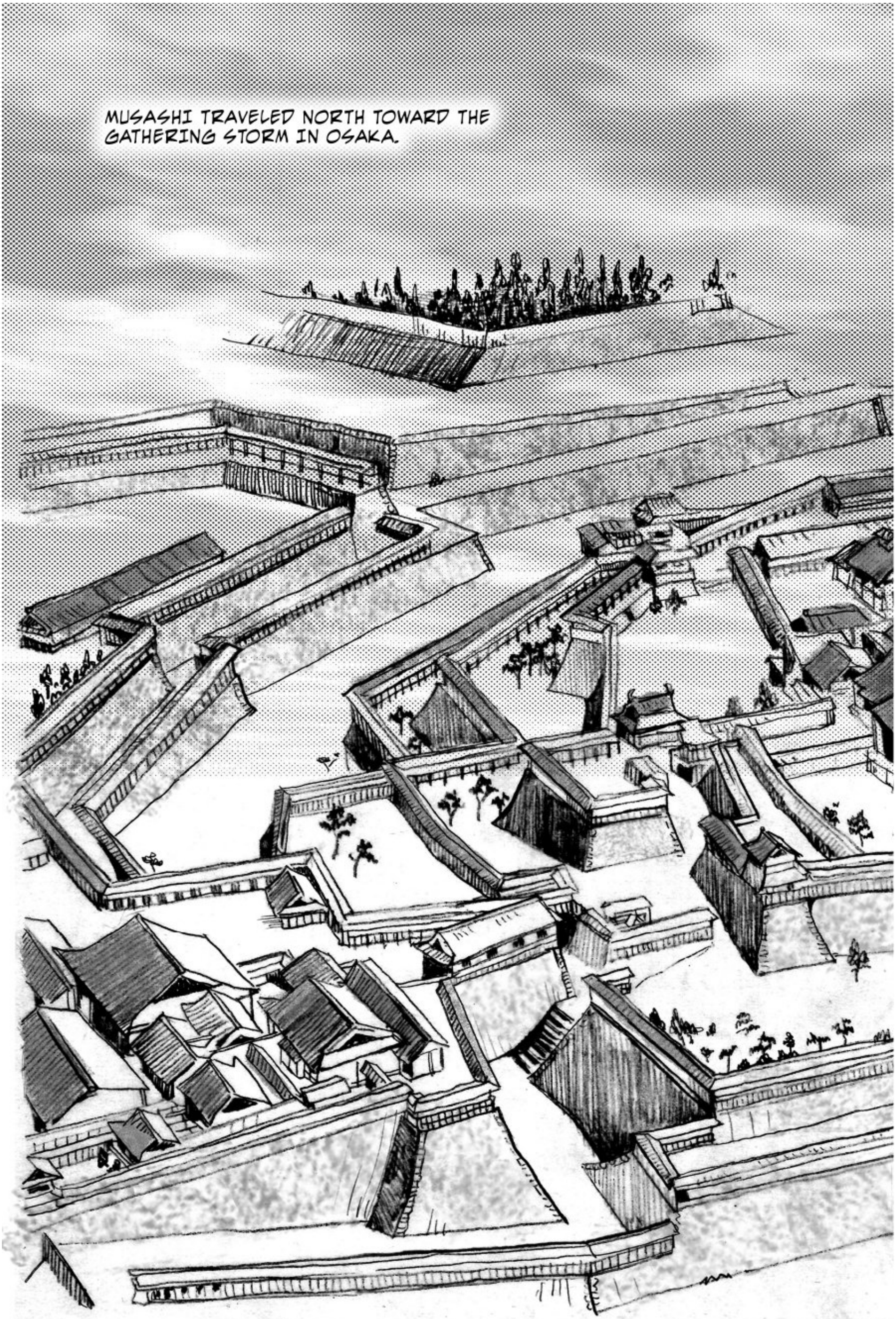

ONE VERSION INSISTS THAT MUSASHI AND KOJIRO ARRIVED ON THE ISLAND THAT IS NOW CALLED GANRYUJIMA AT THE SAME TIME.
ANOTHER VERSION IS THAT AFTER THE DUEL KOJIRO REVIVED, BUT MUSASHI'S STUDENTS HAD SECRETLY CROSSED OVER ALSO AND KILLED HIM.
AND ANOTHER THAT THE BOATMAN WARNED KOJIRO THAT MUSASHI'S MEN WERE WAITING TO AMBUSH HIM, BUT THAT KOJIRO WENT ANYWAY, PREFERRING TO DIE AN HONORABLE DEATH THAN TO RUN AWAY.
YET ANOTHER CLAIMS THAT MUSASHI WON, BUT NOT IN A FAIR WAY... THAT HE HAD TO FLEE AND SEEK THE PROTECTION OF LORD NOBUMOTO AS THE FOLLOWERS OF KOJIRO PURSUED HIM.
OR EVEN THAT MUSASHI WAS HIRED BY THE HOSOKAWA CLAN TO KILL KOJIRO IN ORDER TO WEAKEN THE POWER OF THEIR RIVALS, THE SASAKI CLAN, TO WHOM KOJIRO WAS AFFILIATED.
THEN LASTLY, THERE IS THE QUESTION THAT THE ISLAND IS NOW CALLED "GANRYUJIMA," AFTER KOJIRO – IF MUSASHI WON, WHY IS IT NOT CALLED "MUSASHIJIMA"?


EVEN I CAN'T BE SURE HOW MUCH TRUTH THERE IS IN ANY OF THESE.
HMM.
BUT IT SEEMS THAT THE PURPOSE OF ARRIVING LATE WOULD BE, ONCE AGAIN, TO ENRAGE AND IRRITATE KOJIRO... LEFT WAITING SO LONG IN THE PUNISHING SPRING SUNLIGHT.
AND SURELY MUSASHI FASHIONED THE WOODEN SWORD TO BE JUST A BIT LONGER THAN KOJIRO'S FAMOUS LONG SWORD, THE "DRYING POLE."
STILL, I MARVEL AT THE SENSE OF TIMING, SPACE, AND MOVEMENT THAT MUSASHI WOULD HAVE NEEDED TO GET CLOSE ENOUGH TO HIT HIS OPPONENT... BUT STILL EVADE THE STROKE OF KOJIRO'S SWORD.

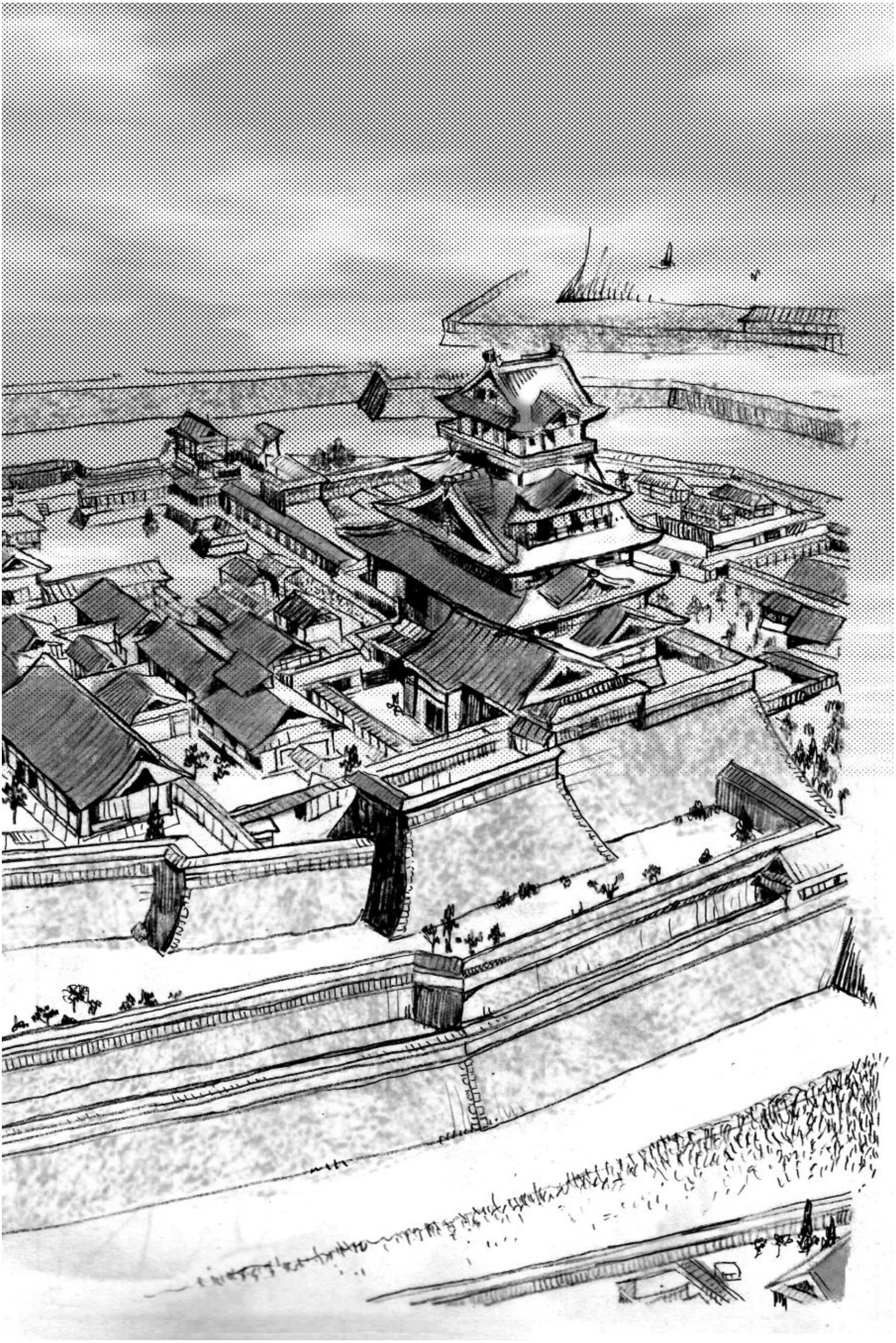


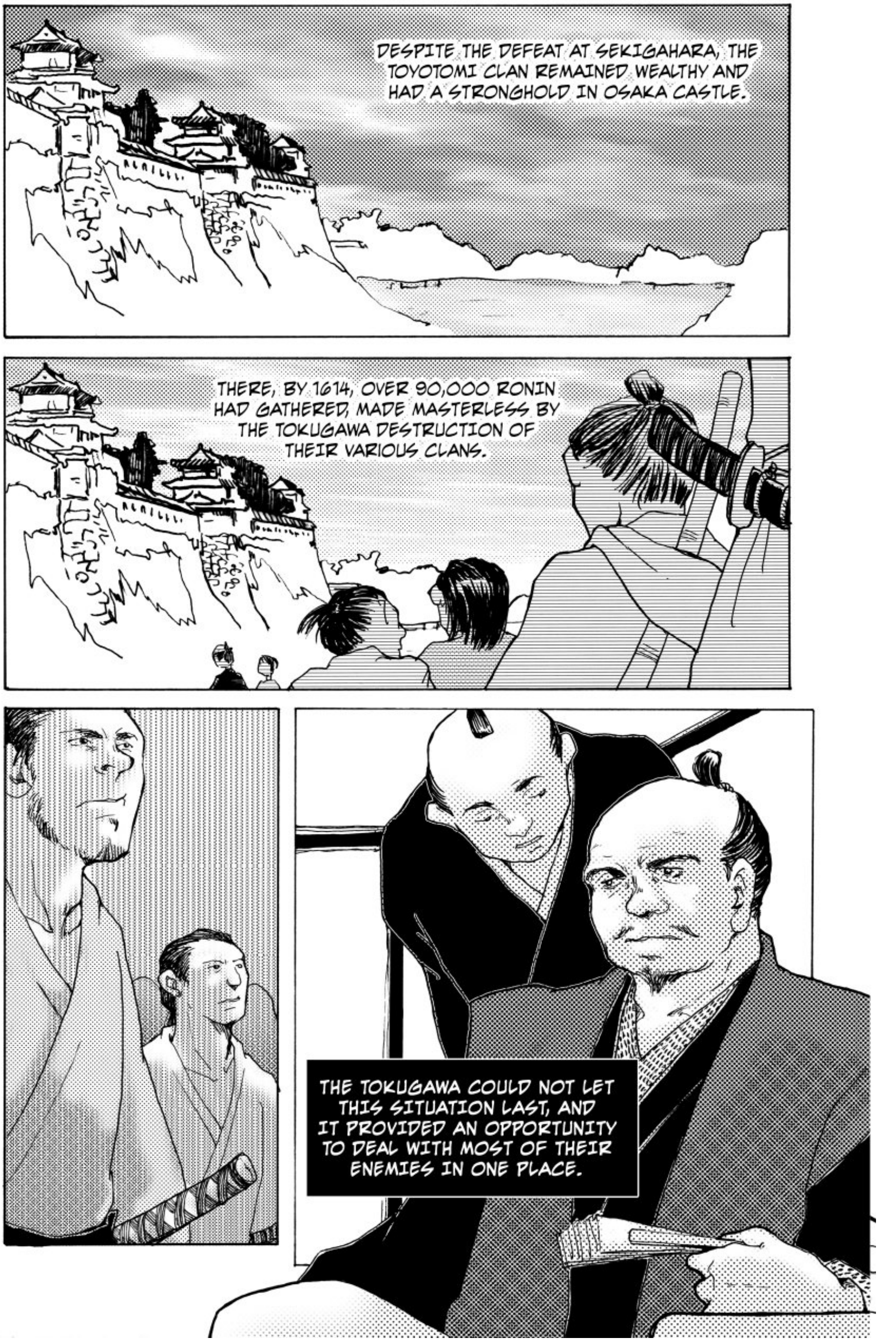

SHALL WE MOVE?
YES, THE SUN HAS CAUGHT UP WITH US HERE.
IN *THE BOOK OF FIVE RINGS* THERE IS AN IMPRESSIVE PART THAT I THINK I CAN QUOTE CORRECTLY, OR I'LL TRY ANYWAY:
"WHEN I HAD PASSED THE AGE OF THIRTY AND THOUGHT BACK OVER MY LIFE, I UNDERSTOOD THAT I HAD NOT BEEN THE VICTOR BECAUSE OF EXTRAORDINARY SKILL IN THE MARTIAL ARTS."
"PERHAPS I HAD SOME NATURAL TALENT OR HAD NOT DEPARTED FROM NATURAL PRINCIPLES. OR... WAS IT THAT THE MARTIAL ARTS OF THE OTHER STYLES WERE LACKING?"
"AFTER THAT, I WAS DETERMINED ALL THE MORE TO REACH A CLEARER UNDERSTANDING OF THE DEEP PRINCIPLES, SO I PRACTICED DAY AND NIGHT."

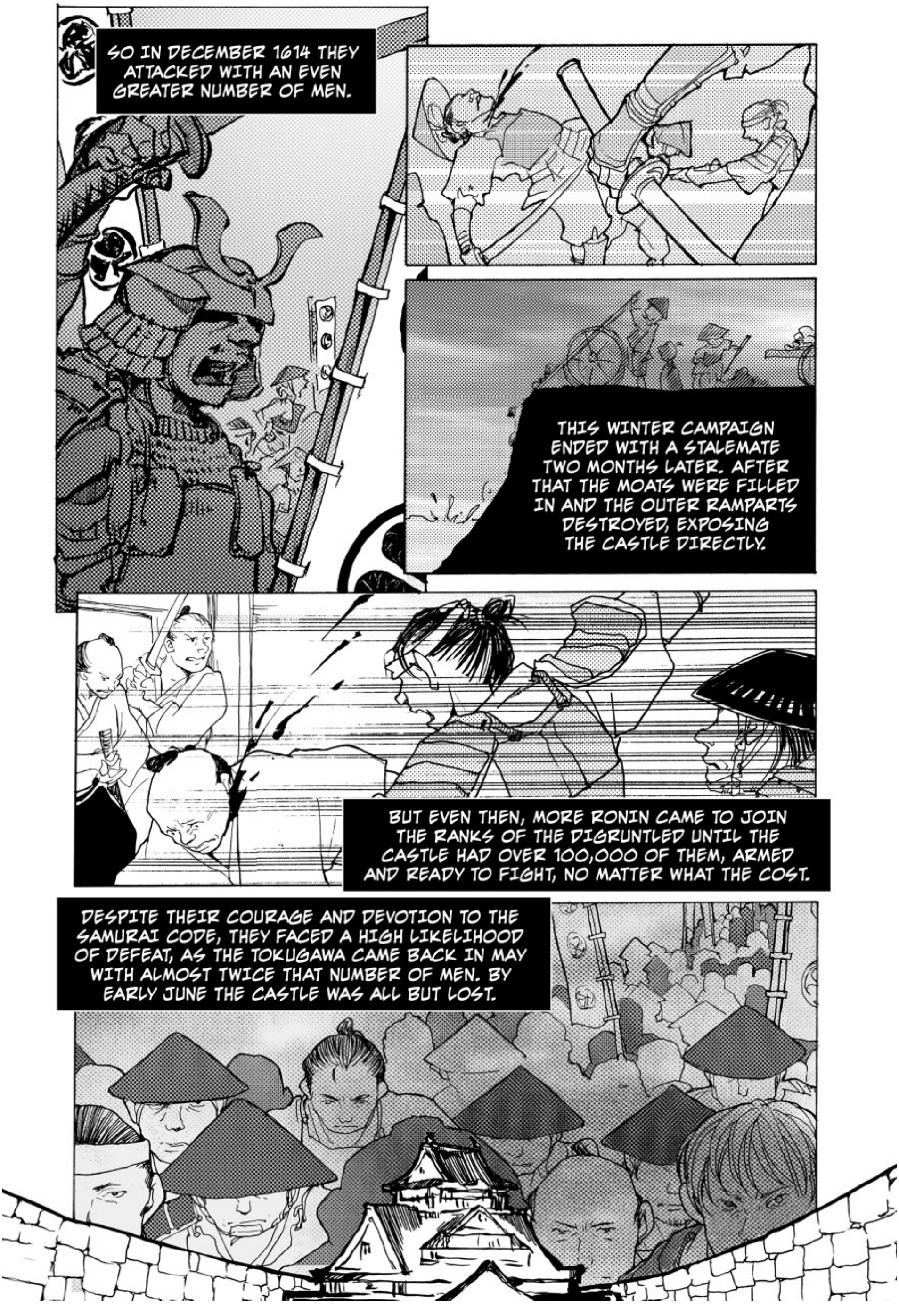

VERY IMPRESSIVE, THAT'S IT EXACTLY.
FROM AROUND THIS POINT THERE SEEMED TO BE A CHANGE IN MY FATHER.
HE TOOK PART IN FAR FEWER MATCHES AND THEY WERE RARELY FATAL.
HIS FOCUS TURNED, AS HE NOTED IN THAT ACCOUNT, INWARD AND TOWARD THOSE DEEP PRINCIPLES...
WE MAY SAY THAT HE WAS ENTERING THE SECOND STAGE OF HIS LIFE.
BUT PLEASE GO ON, I'M SORRY TO HAVE INTERRUPTED.
WELL... AFTER THAT FAMOUS VICTORY OVER KOJIRO, NATURALLY MUSASHI'S REPUTE GREW TREMENDOUSLY. MORE AND MORE PEOPLE WANTED TO LEARN FROM HIM, INCLUDING SOME RENOWNED LORDS.

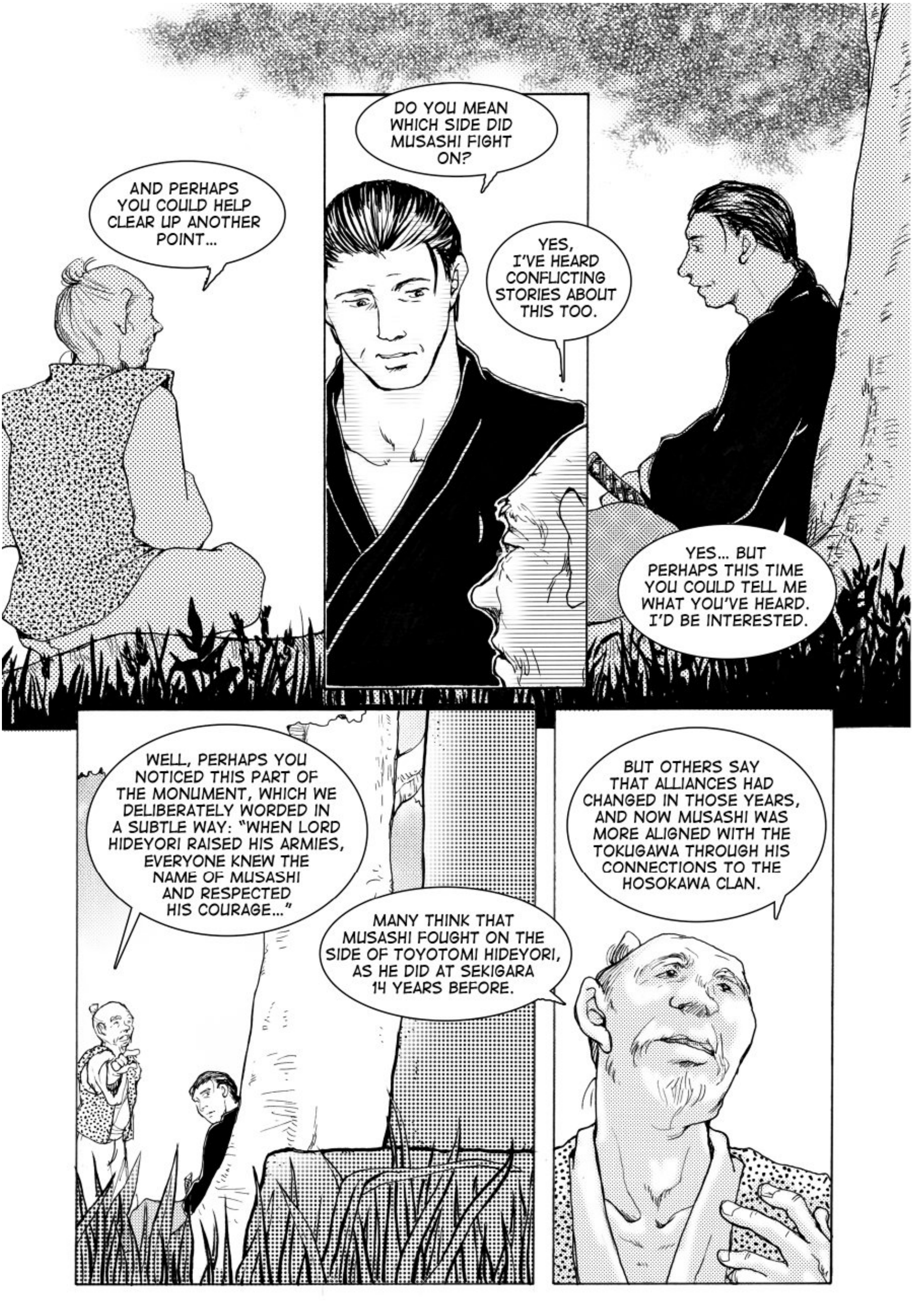


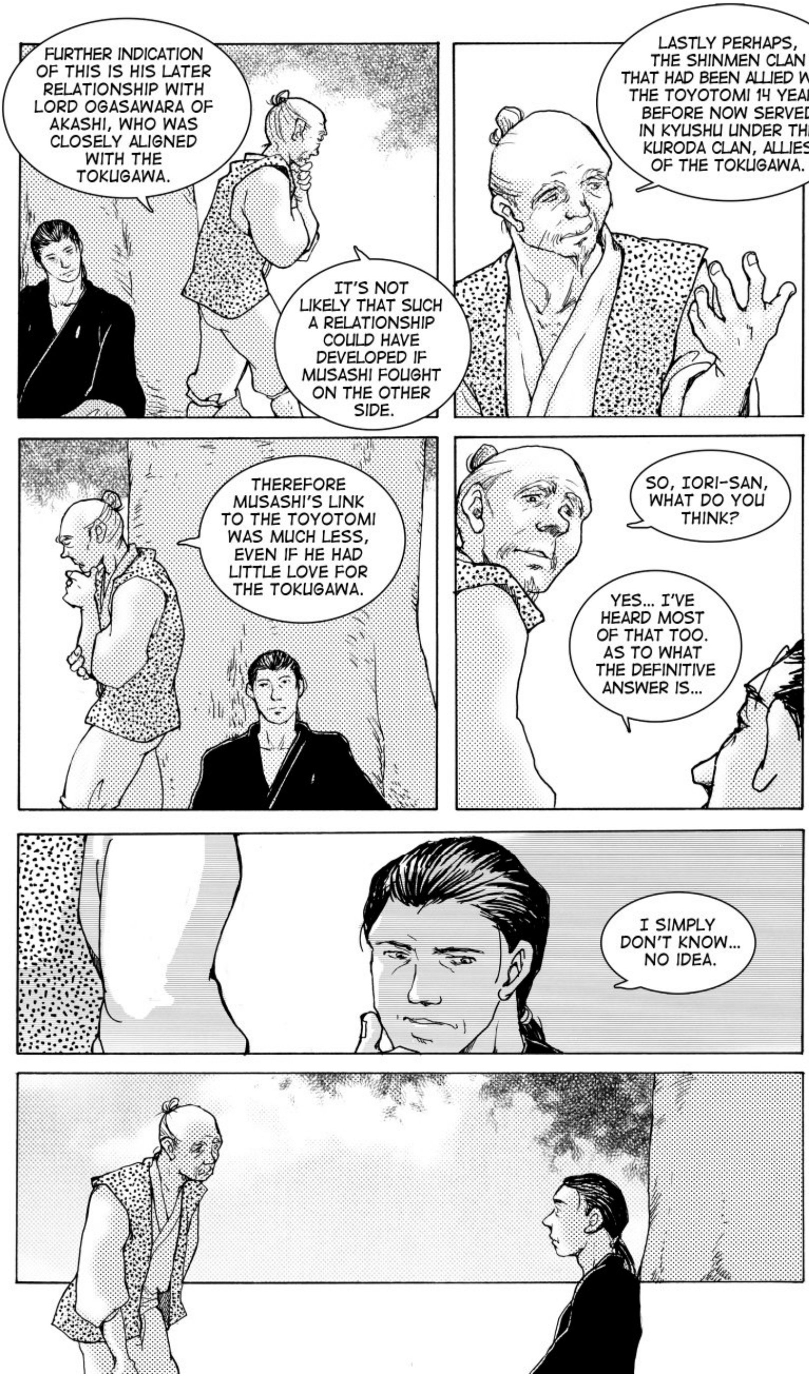
MUSASHI TRAVELED NORTH TOWARD THE GATHERING STORM IN OSAKA.

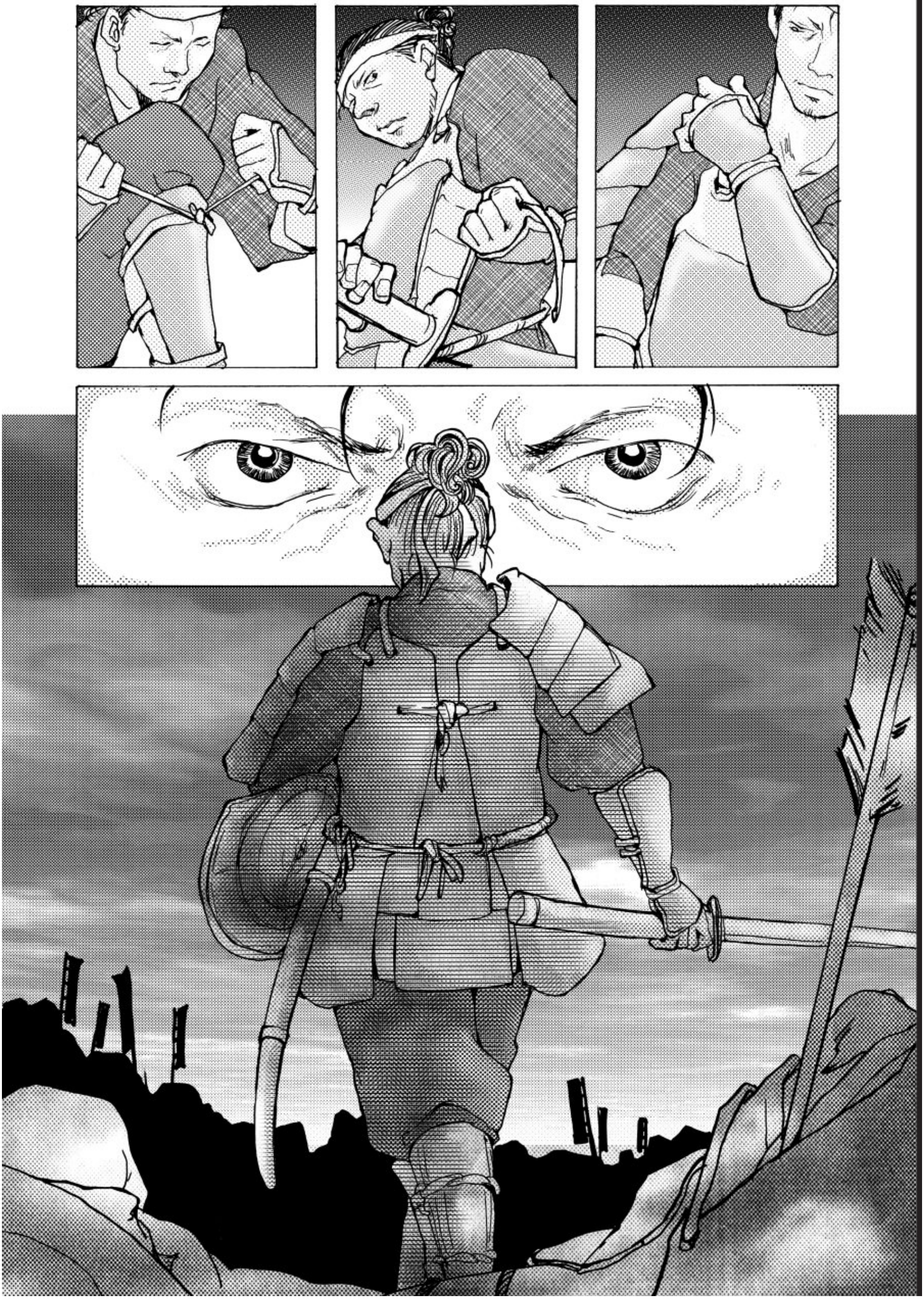


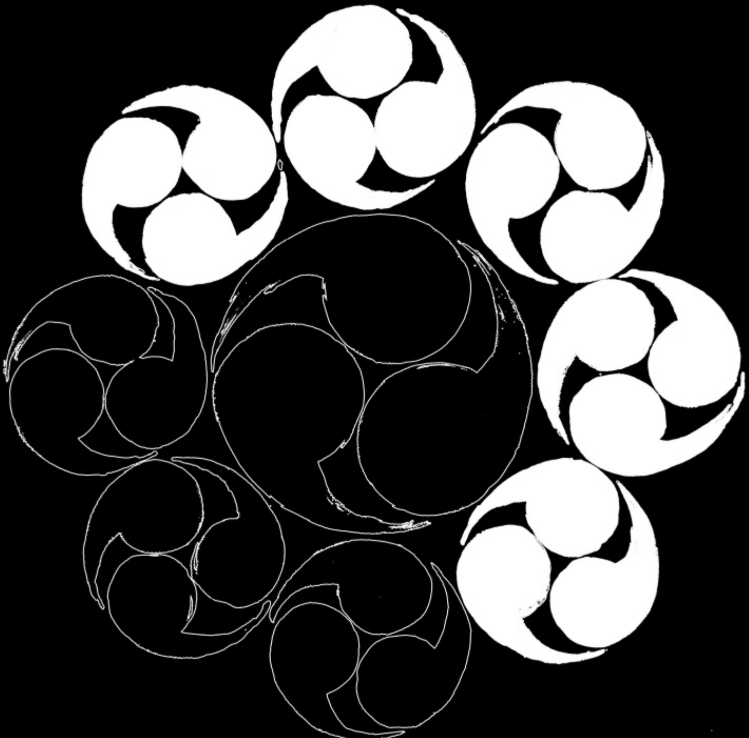

DESPITE THE DEFEAT AT SEKIGAHARA, THE TOYOTOMI CLAN REMAINED WEALTHY AND HAD A STRONGHOLD IN OSAKA CASTLE.
THERE, BY 1614, OVER 90,000 RONIN HAD GATHERED, MADE MASTERLESS BY THE TOKUGAWA DESTRUCTION OF THEIR VARIOUS CLANS.
THE TOKUGAWA COULD NOT LET THIS SITUATION LAST, AND IT PROVIDED AN OPPORTUNITY TO DEAL WITH MOST OF THEIR ENEMIES IN ONE PLACE.

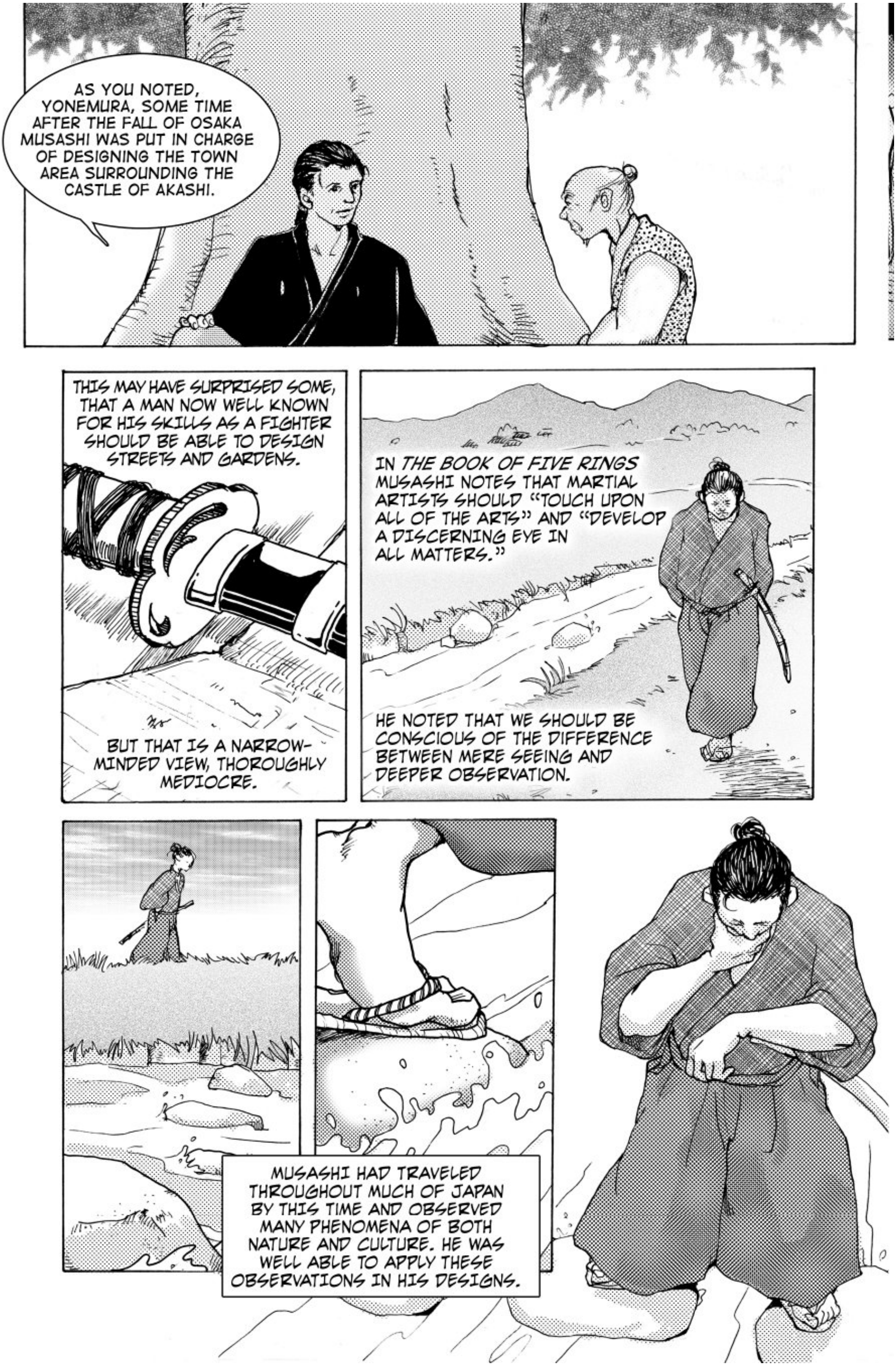

SO IN DECEMBER 1614 THEY ATTACKED WITH AN EVEN GREATER NUMBER OF MEN.
THIS WINTER CAMPAIGN ENDED WITH A STALEMATE TWO MONTHS LATER. AFTER THAT THE MOATS WERE FILLED IN AND THE OUTER RAMPARTS DESTROYED, EXPOSING THE CASTLE DIRECTLY.
BUT EVEN THEN, MORE RONIN CAME TO JOIN THE RANKS OF THE DIGRUNTLED UNTIL THE CASTLE HAD OVER 100,000 OF THEM, ARMED AND READY TO FIGHT, NO MATTER WHAT THE COST.
DESPITE THEIR COURAGE AND DEVOTION TO THE SAMURAI CODE, THEY FACED A HIGH LIKELIHOOD OF DEFEAT, AS THE TOKUGAWA CAME BACK IN MAY WITH ALMOST TWICE THAT NUMBER OF MEN. BY EARLY JUNE THE CASTLE WAS ALL BUT LOST.

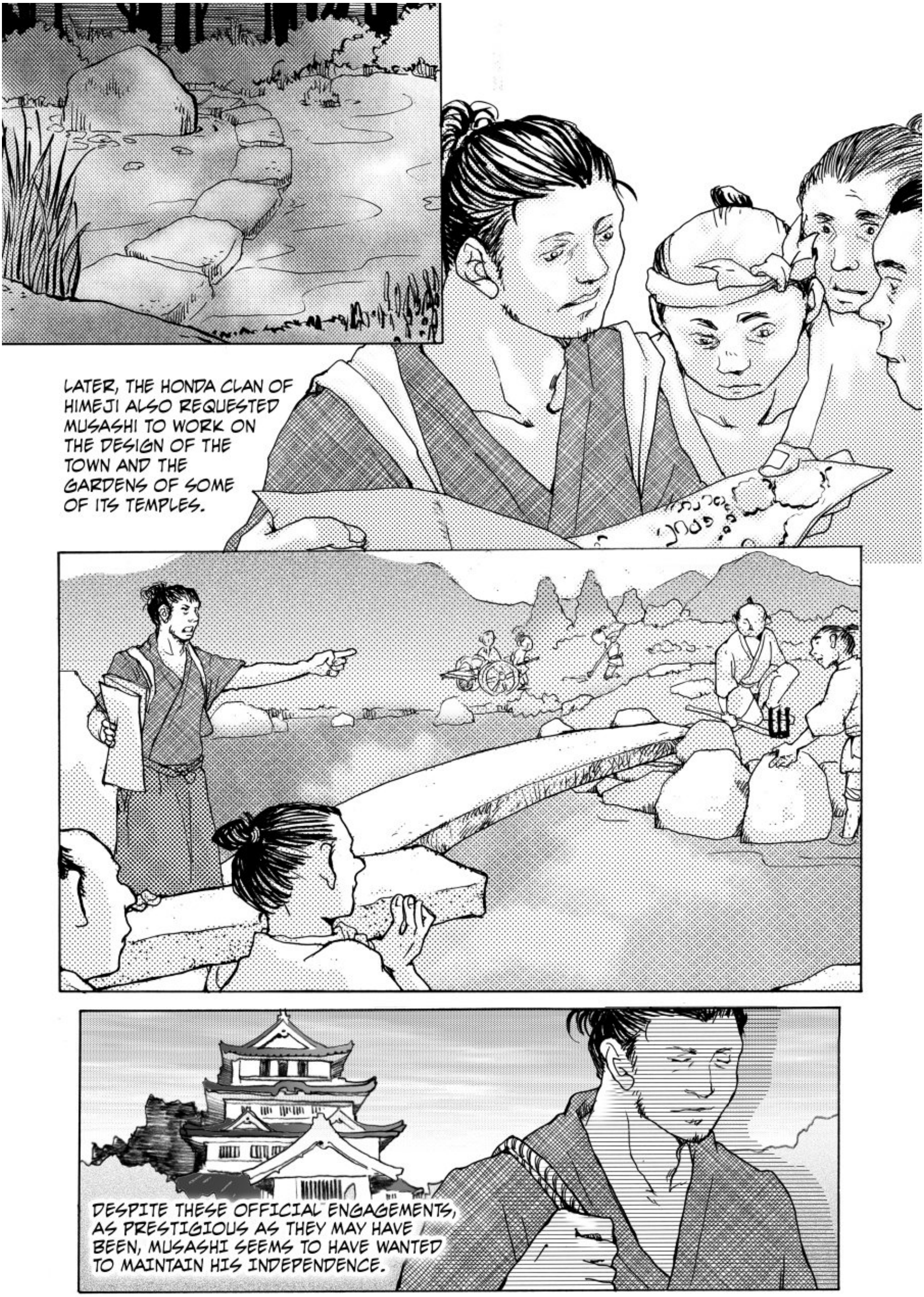

AND PERHAPS YOU COULD HELP CLEAR UP ANOTHER POINT...
DO YOU MEAN WHICH SIDE DID MUSASHI FIGHT ON?
YES, I'VE HEARD CONFLICTING STORIES ABOUT THIS TOO.
YES... BUT PERHAPS THIS TIME YOU COULD TELL ME WHAT YOU'VE HEARD. I'D BE INTERESTED.
WELL, PERHAPS YOU NOTICED THIS PART OF THE MONUMENT, WHICH WE DELIBERATELY WORDED IN A SUBTLE WAY: "WHEN LORD HIDEYORI RAISED HIS ARMIES, EVERYONE KNEW THE NAME OF MUSASHI AND RESPECTED HIS COURAGE..."
MANY THINK THAT MUSASHI FOUGHT ON THE SIDE OF TOYOTOMI HIDEYORI, AS HE DID AT SEKIGARA 14 YEARS BEFORE.
BUT OTHERS SAY THAT ALLIANCES HAD CHANGED IN THOSE YEARS, AND NOW MUSASHI WAS MORE ALIGNED WITH THE TOKUGAWA THROUGH HIS CONNECTIONS TO THE HOSOKAWA CLAN.

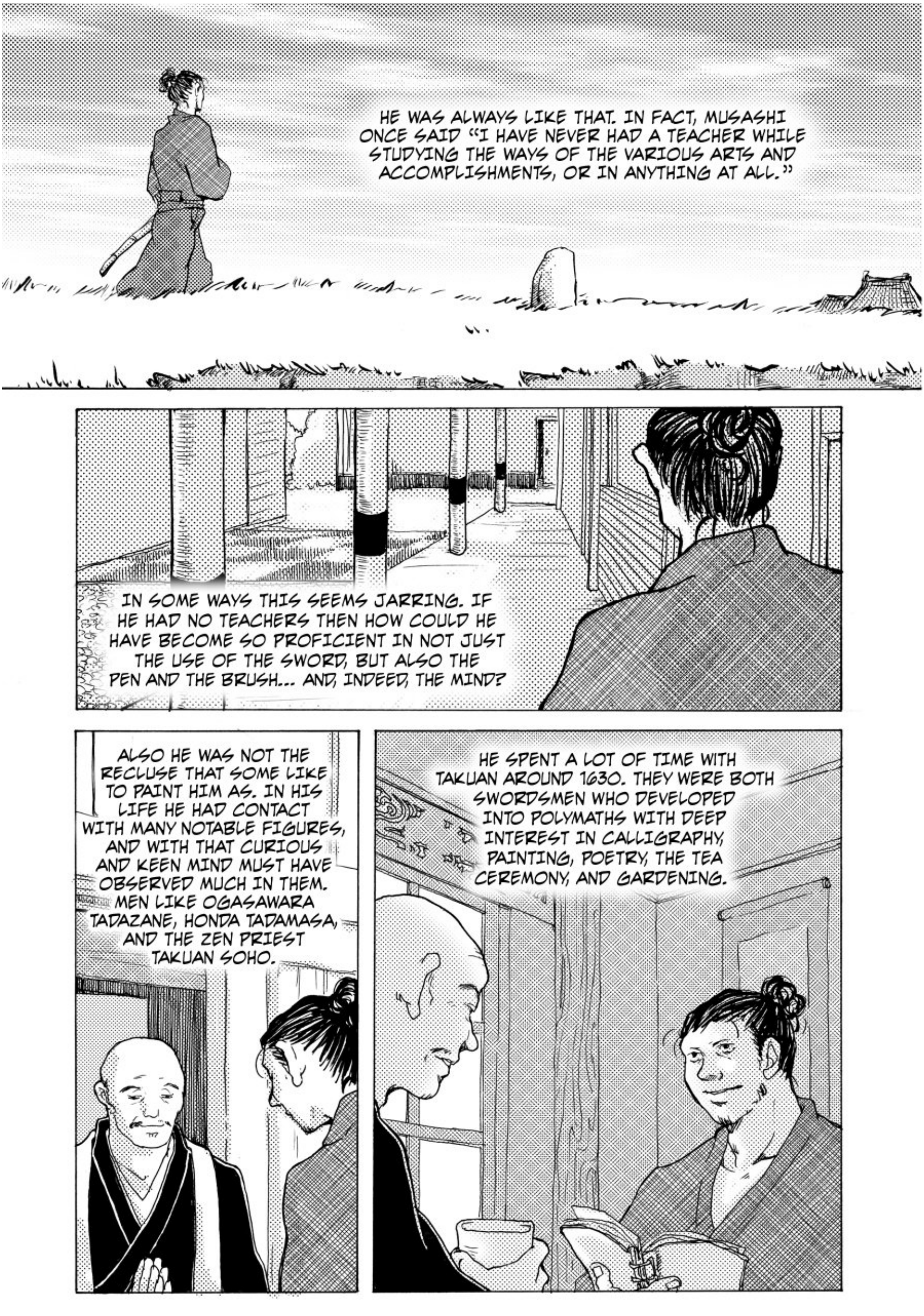

FURTHER INDICATION OF THIS IS HIS LATER RELATIONSHIP WITH LORD OGASAWARA OF AKASHI, WHO WAS CLOSELY ALIGNED WITH THE TOKUGAWA.
IT'S NOT LIKELY THAT SUCH A RELATIONSHIP COULD HAVE DEVELOPED IF MUSASHI FOUGHT ON THE OTHER SIDE.
LASTLY PERHAPS, THE SHINMEN CLAN THAT HAD BEEN ALLIED WITH THE TOYOTOMI 14 YEARS BEFORE NOW SERVED IN KYUSHU UNDER THE KURODA CLAN, ALLIES OF THE TOKUGAWA.
THEREFORE MUSASHI'S LINK TO THE TOYOTOMI WAS MUCH LESS, EVEN IF HE HAD LITTLE LOVE FOR THE TOKUGAWA.
SO, IORI-SAN, WHAT DO YOU THINK?
YES... I'VE HEARD MOST OF THAT TOO. AS TO WHAT THE DEFINITIVE ANSWER IS...
I SIMPLY DON'T KNOW... NO IDEA.

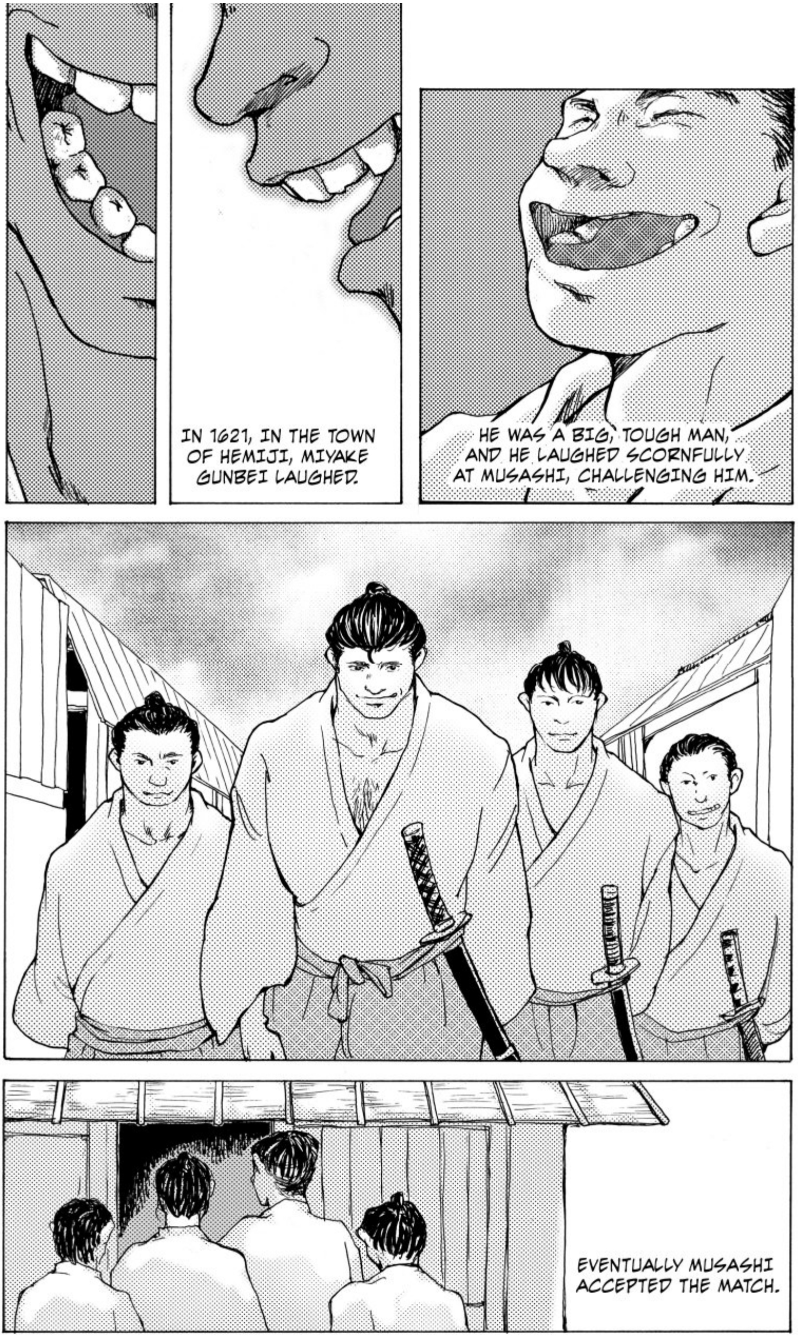


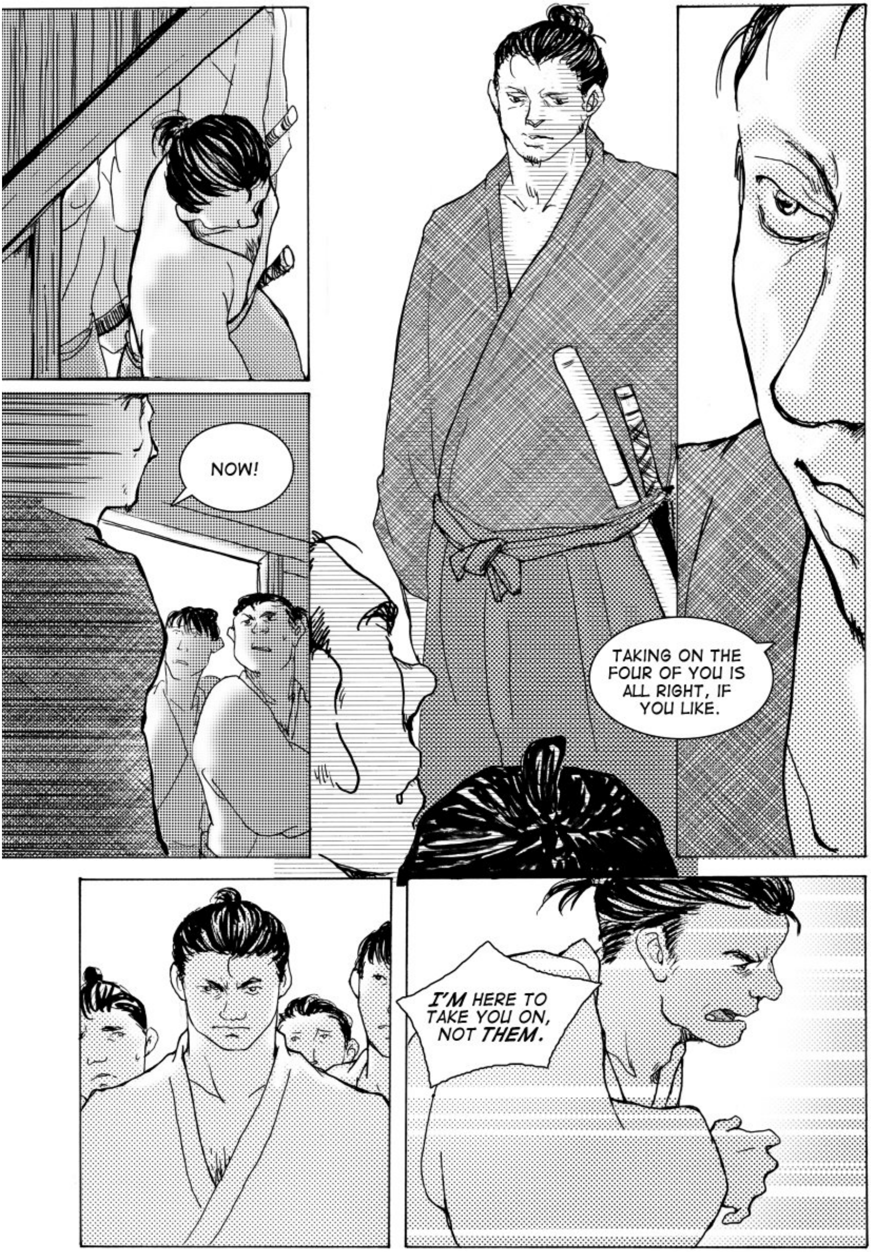


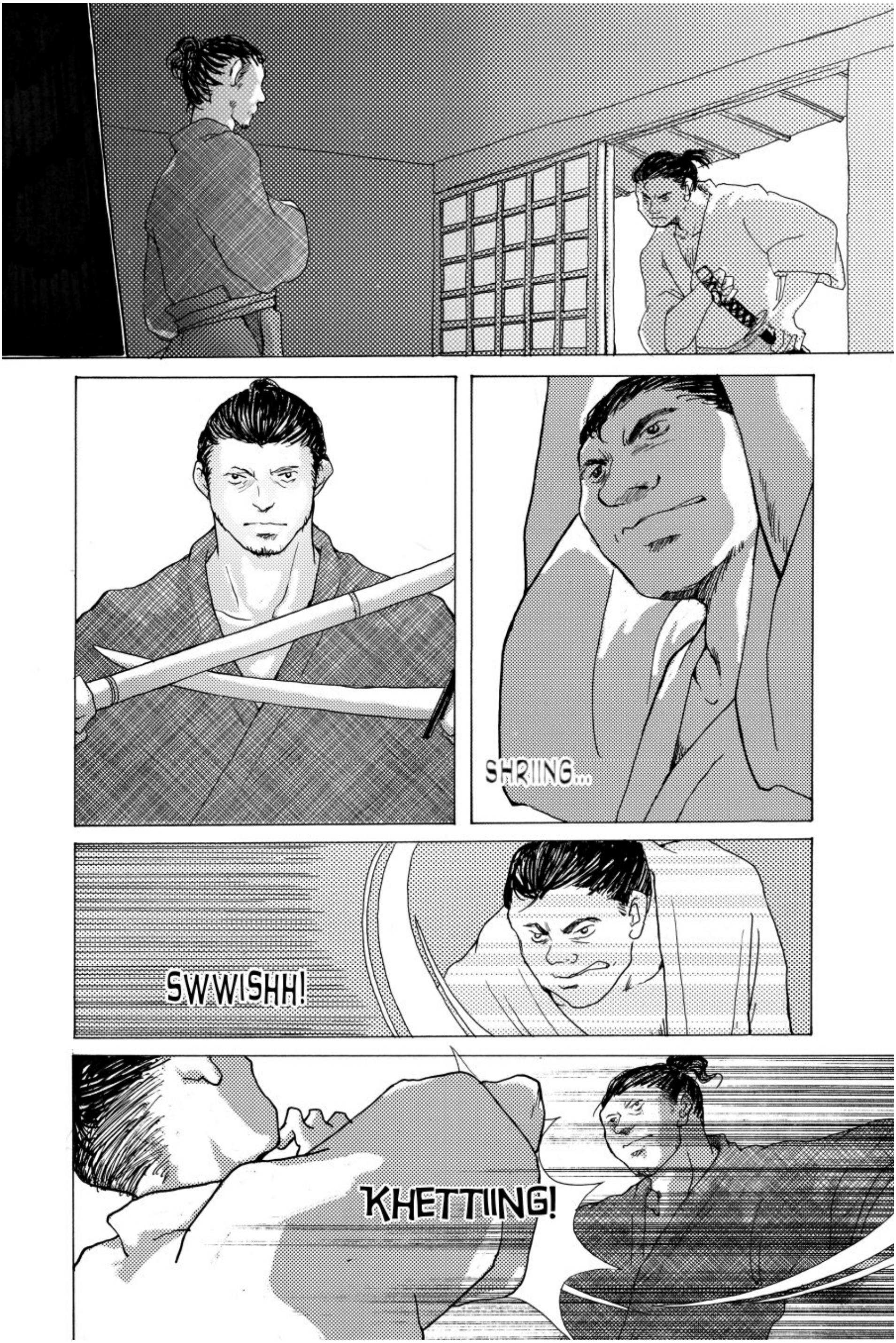

AS YOU NOTED, YONEMURA, SOME TIME AFTER THE FALL OF OSAKA MUSASHI WAS PUT IN CHARGE OF DESIGNING THE TOWN AREA SURROUNDING THE CASTLE OF AKASHI.
THIS MAY HAVE SURPRISED SOME, THAT A MAN NOW WELL KNOWN FOR HIS SKILLS AS A FIGHTER SHOULD BE ABLE TO DESIGN STREETS AND GARDENS.
BUT THAT IS A NARROW-MINDED VIEW, THOROUGHLY MEDIOCRE.
IN *THE BOOK OF FIVE RINGS* MUSASHI NOTES THAT MARTIAL ARTISTS SHOULD "TOUCH UPON ALL OF THE ARTS" AND "DEVELOP A DISCERNING EYE IN ALL MATTERS."
HE NOTED THAT WE SHOULD BE CONSCIOUS OF THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MERE SEEING AND DEEPER OBSERVATION.
MUSASHI HAD TRAVELED THROUGHOUT MUCH OF JAPAN BY THIS TIME AND OBSERVED MANY PHENOMENA OF BOTH NATURE AND CULTURE. HE WAS WELL ABLE TO APPLY THESE OBSERVATIONS IN HIS DESIGNS.

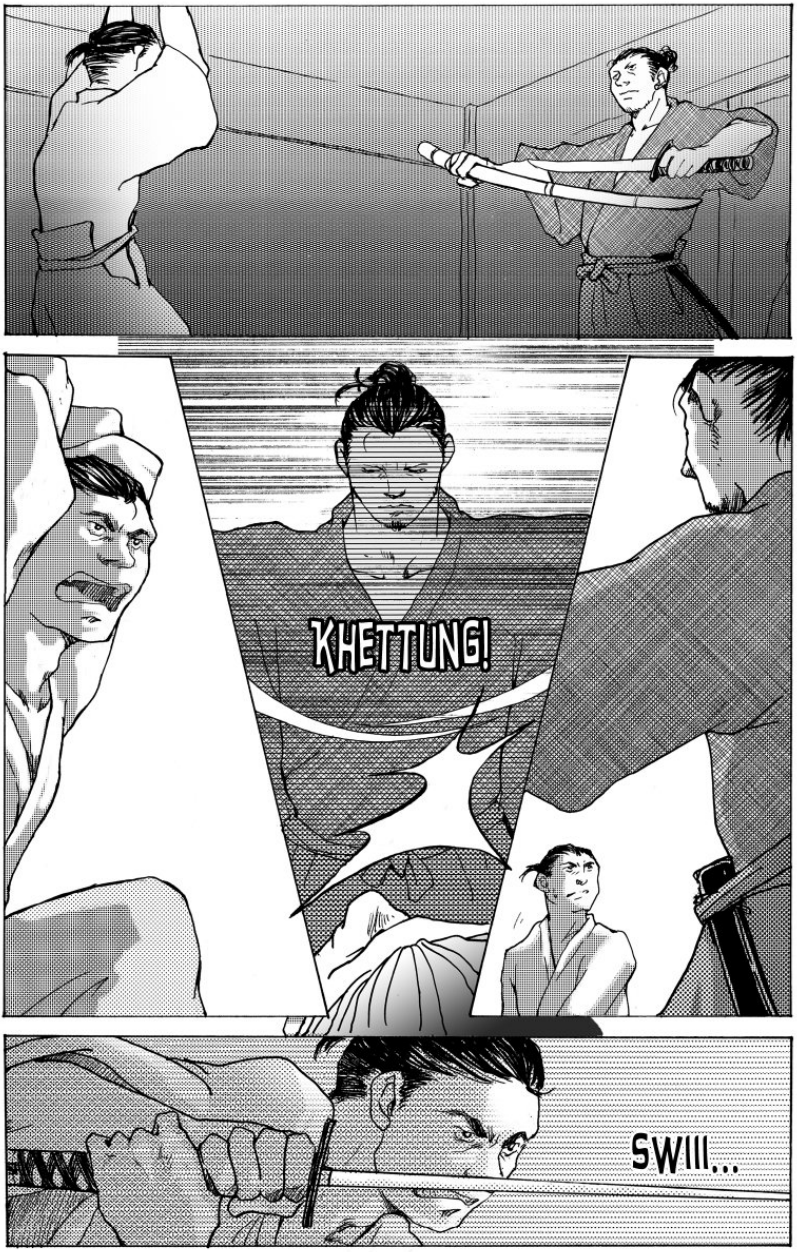

LATER, THE HONDA CLAN OF HIMEJI ALSO REQUESTED MUSASHI TO WORK ON THE DESIGN OF THE TOWN AND THE GARDENS OF SOME OF ITS TEMPLES.
DESPITE THESE OFFICIAL ENGAGEMENTS, AS PRESTIGIOUS AS THEY MAY HAVE BEEN, MUSASHI SEEMS TO HAVE WANTED TO MAINTAIN HIS INDEPENDENCE.

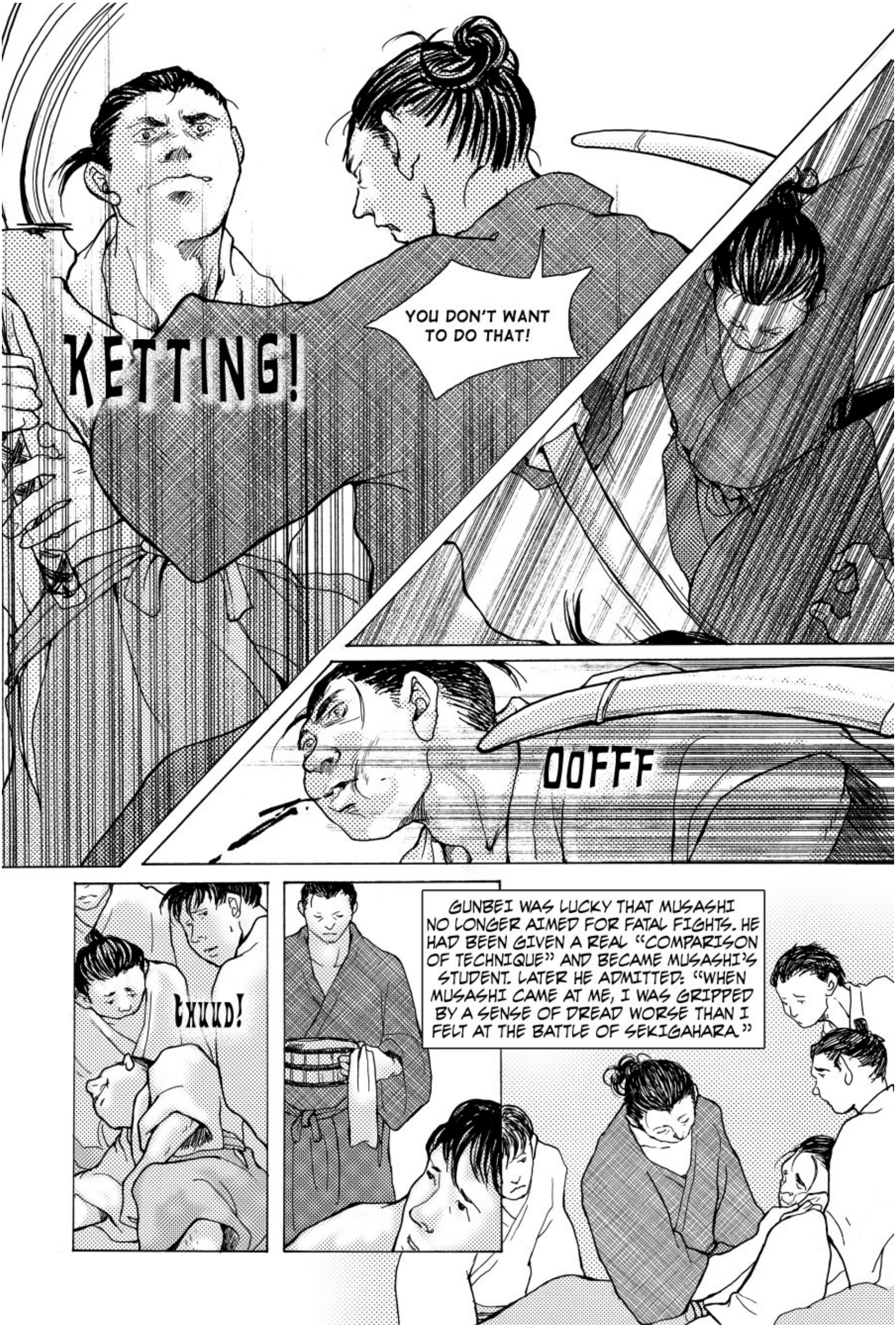

HE WAS ALWAYS LIKE THAT. IN FACT, MUSASHI ONCE SAID "I HAVE NEVER HAD A TEACHER WHILE STUDYING THE WAYS OF THE VARIOUS ARTS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS, OR IN ANYTHING AT ALL."
IN SOME WAYS THIS SEEMS JARRING. IF HE HAD NO TEACHERS THEN HOW COULD HE HAVE BECOME SO PROFICIENT IN NOT JUST THE USE OF THE SWORD, BUT ALSO THE PEN AND THE BRUSH... AND, INDEED, THE MIND?
ALSO HE WAS NOT THE RECLUSE THAT SOME LIKE TO PAINT HIM AS. IN HIS LIFE HE HAD CONTACT WITH MANY NOTABLE FIGURES, AND WITH THAT CURIOUS AND KEEN MIND MUST HAVE OBSERVED MUCH IN THEM. MEN LIKE OGASAWARA TADAZANE, HONDA TADAMASA, AND THE ZEN PRIEST TAKUAN SOHO.
HE SPENT A LOT OF TIME WITH TAKUAN AROUND 1630. THEY WERE BOTH SWORDSMEN WHO DEVELOPED INTO POLYMATHS WITH DEEP INTEREST IN CALLIGRAPHY, PAINTING, POETRY, THE TEA CEREMONY, AND GARDENING.

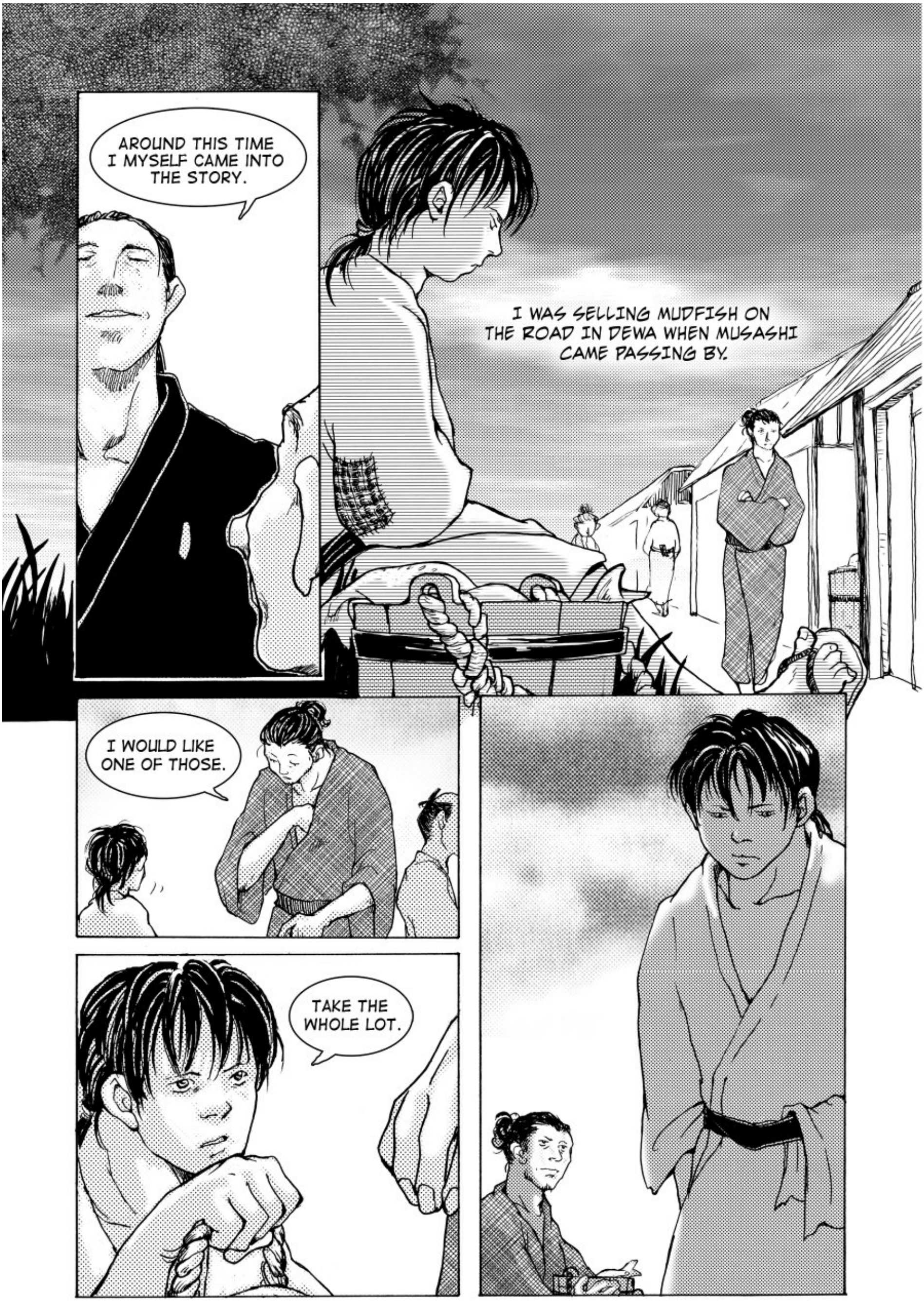

IN 1621, IN THE TOWN OF HEMIJI, MIYAKE GUNBEI LAUGHED.
HE WAS A BIG, TOUGH MAN, AND HE LAUGHED SCORNFULLY AT MUSASHI, CHALLENGING HIM.
EVENTUALLY MUSASHI ACCEPTED THE MATCH.

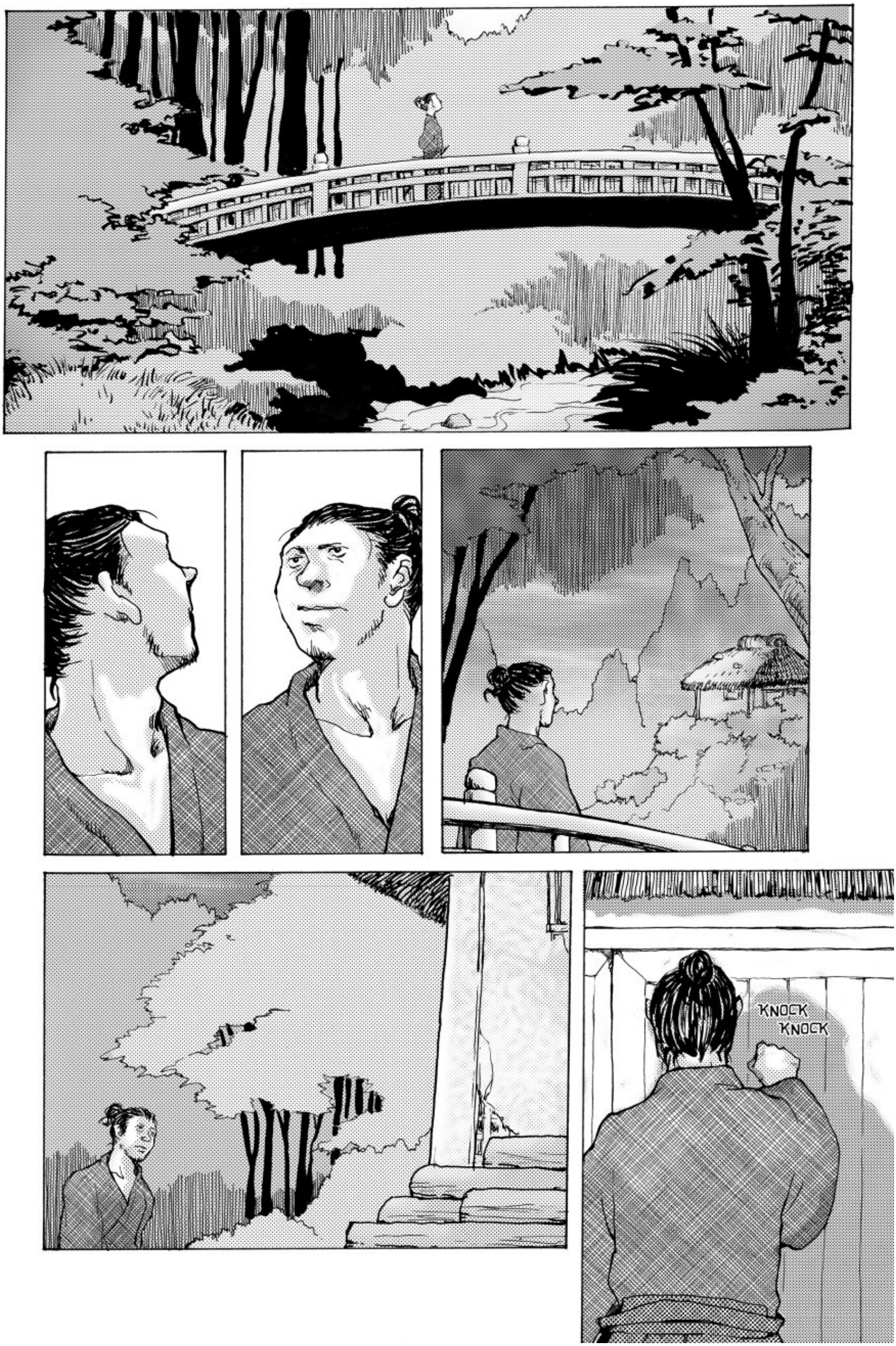

NOW!
TAKING ON THE FOUR OF YOU IS ALL RIGHT, IF YOU LIKE.
I'M HERE TO TAKE YOU ON, NOT *THEM*.

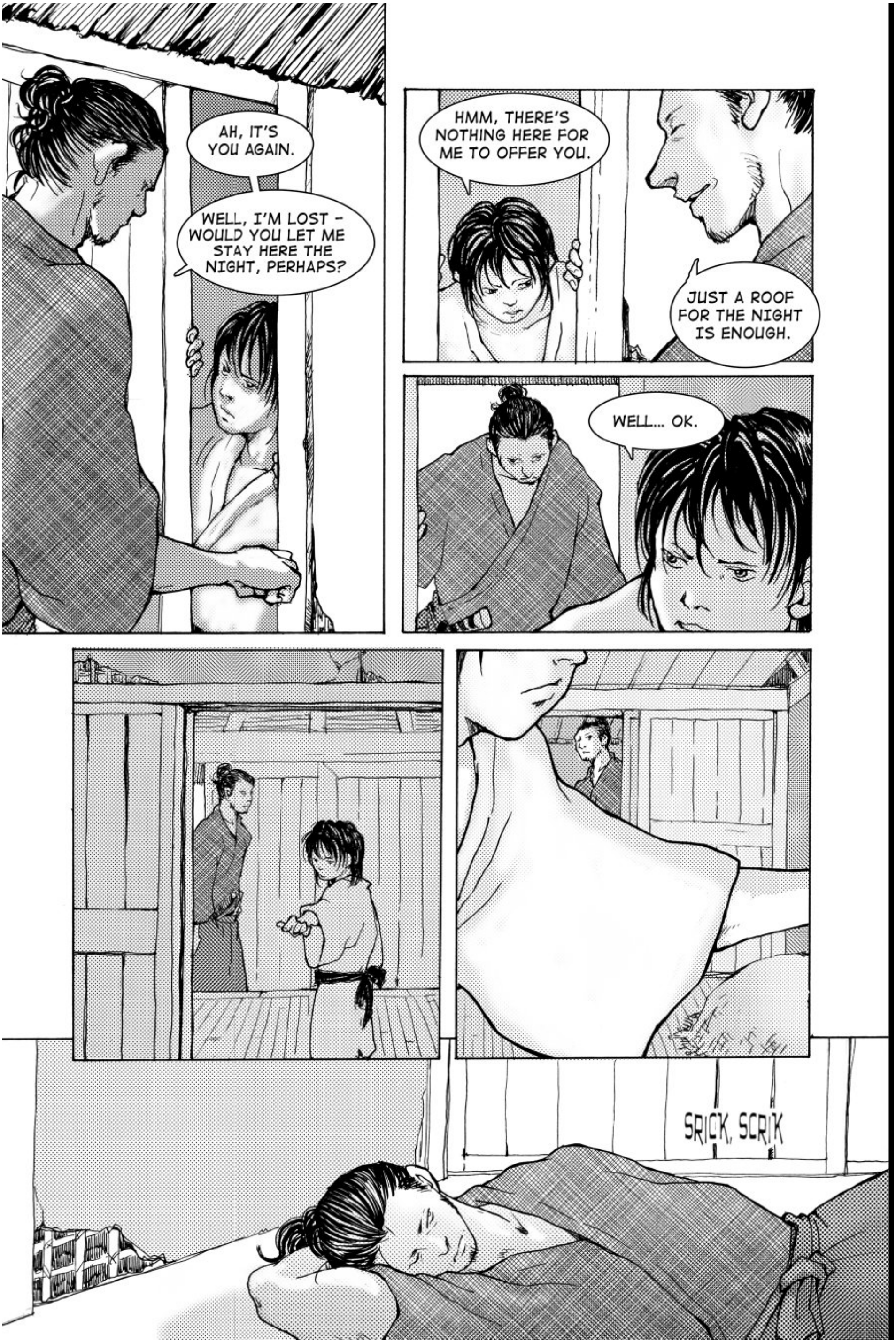

SHRIING...
SWWISHH!
KHETTIING!

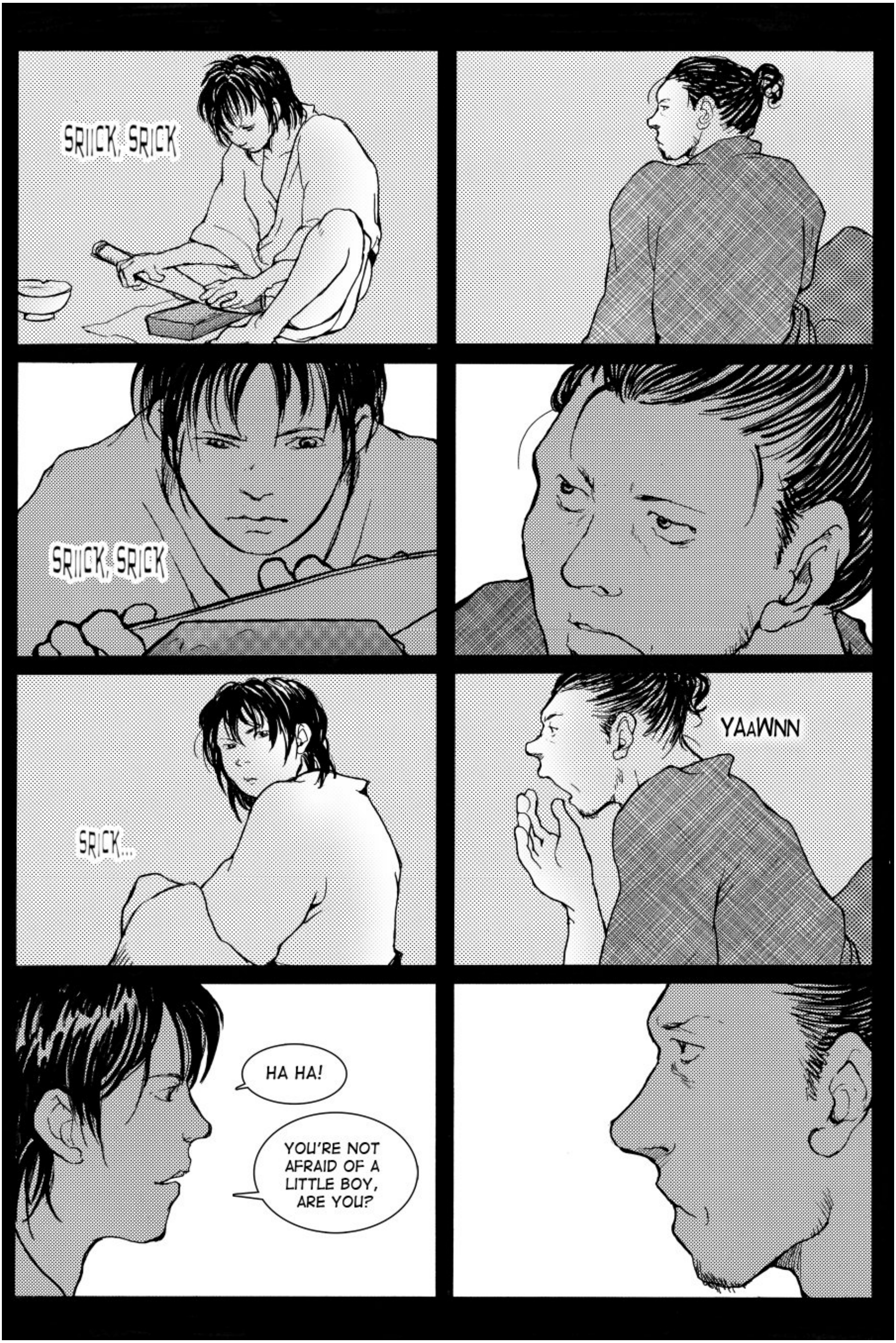

KHETTUNG!
SWIII...

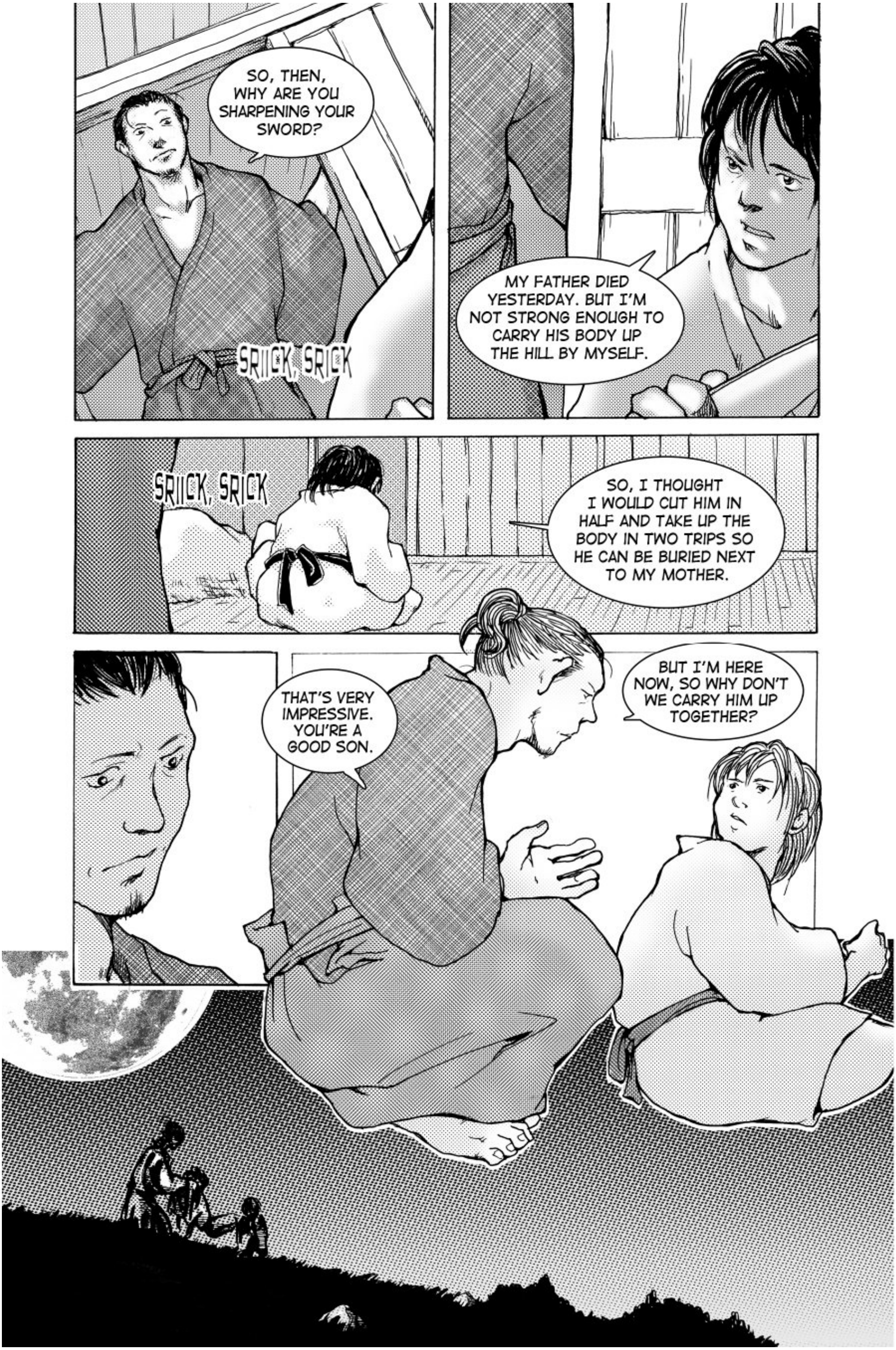

KETTING!
YOU DON'T WANT TO DO THAT!
OOFFF
THUUD!
GUNBEI WAS LUCKY THAT MUSASHI NO LONGER AIMED FOR FATAL FIGHTS. HE HAD BEEN GIVEN A REAL "COMPARISON OF TECHNIQUE" AND BECAME MUSASHI'S STUDENT. LATER HE ADMITTED: "WHEN MUSASHI CAME AT ME, I WAS GRIPPED BY A SENSE OF DREAD WORSE THAN I FELT AT THE BATTLE OF SEKIGAHARA."

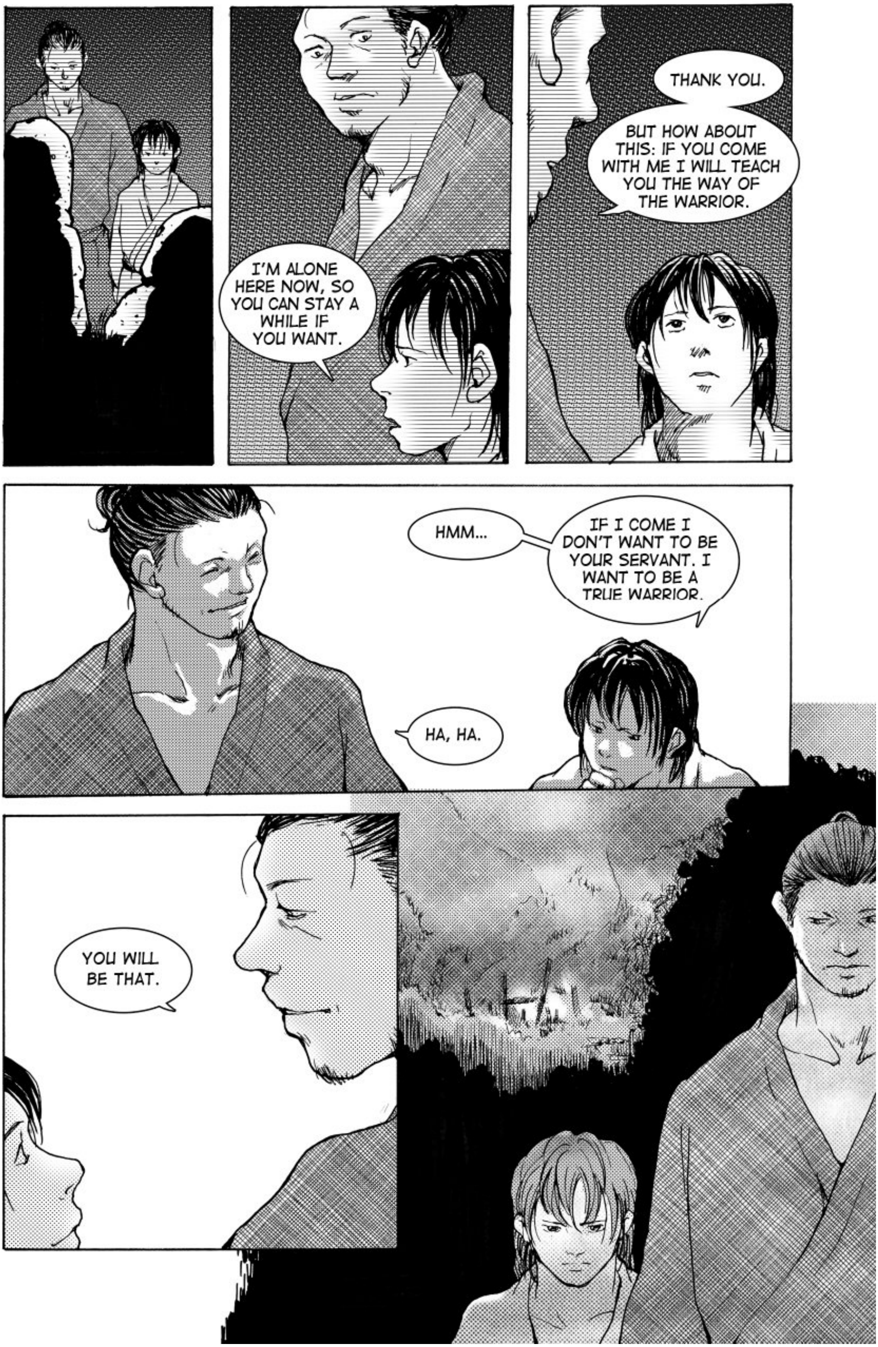

AROUND THIS TIME I MYSELF CAME INTO THE STORY.
I WAS SELLING MUDFISH ON THE ROAD IN DEWA WHEN MUSASHI CAME PASSING BY.
I WOULD LIKE ONE OF THOSE.
TAKE THE WHOLE LOT.

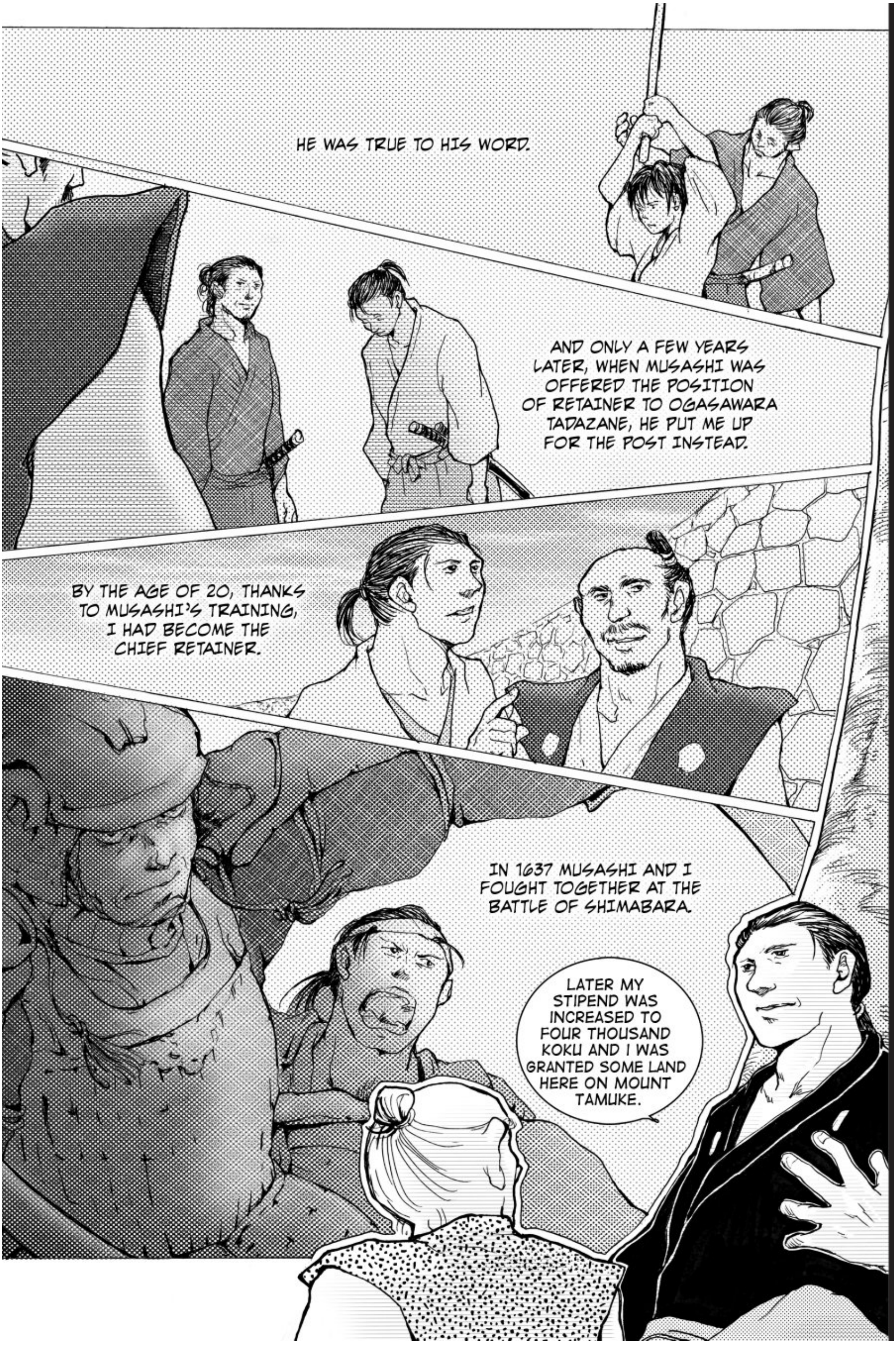

KNOCK KNOCK

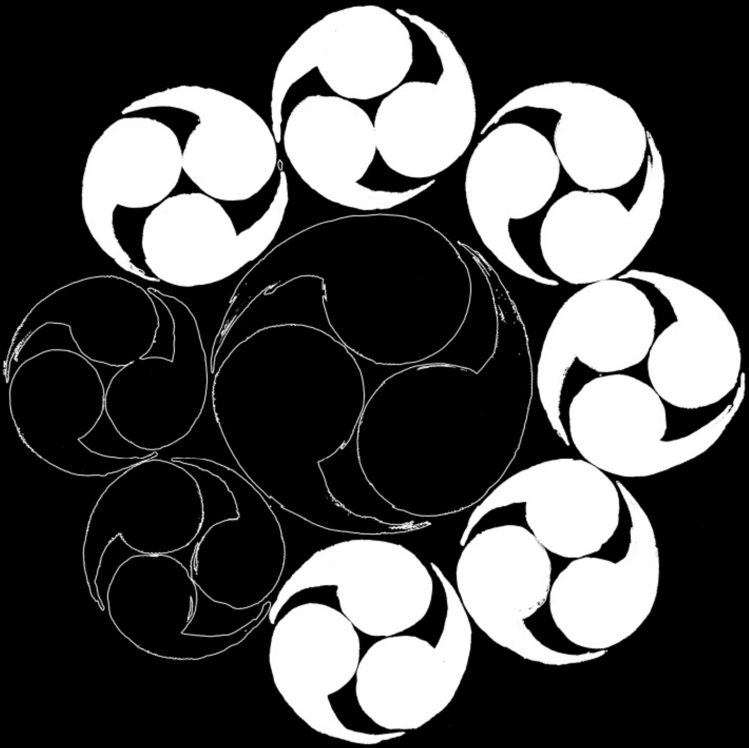

AH, IT'S YOU AGAIN.
WELL, I'M LOST - WOULD YOU LET ME STAY HERE THE NIGHT, PERHAPS?
HMM, THERE'S NOTHING HERE FOR ME TO OFFER YOU.
JUST A ROOF FOR THE NIGHT IS ENOUGH.
WELL... OK.
SRICK, SCRIK

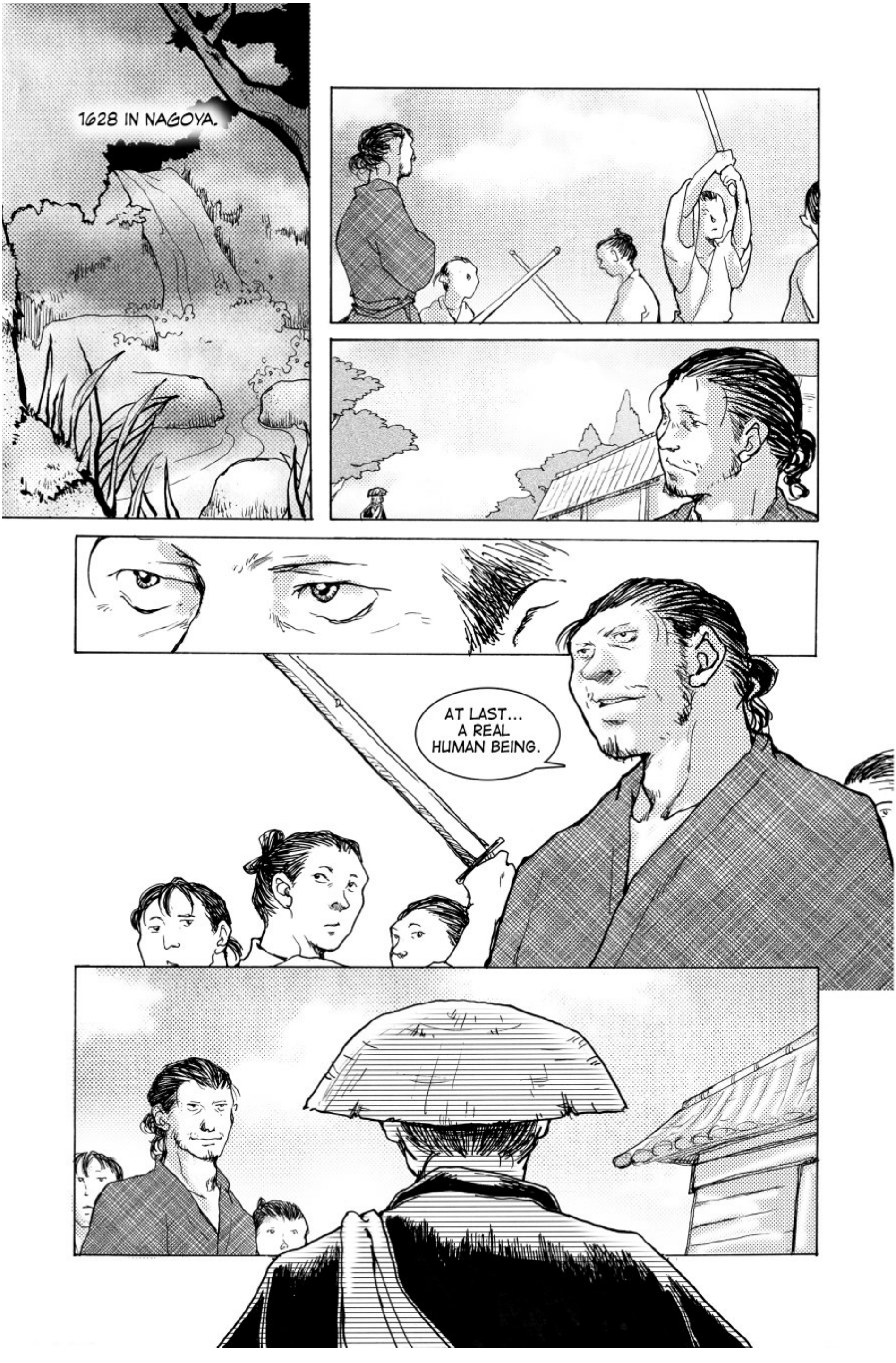

SRIICK, SRICK
SRIICK, SRICK
SRICK...
YAAWNN
HA HA!
YOU'RE NOT AFRAID OF A LITTLE BOY, ARE YOU?

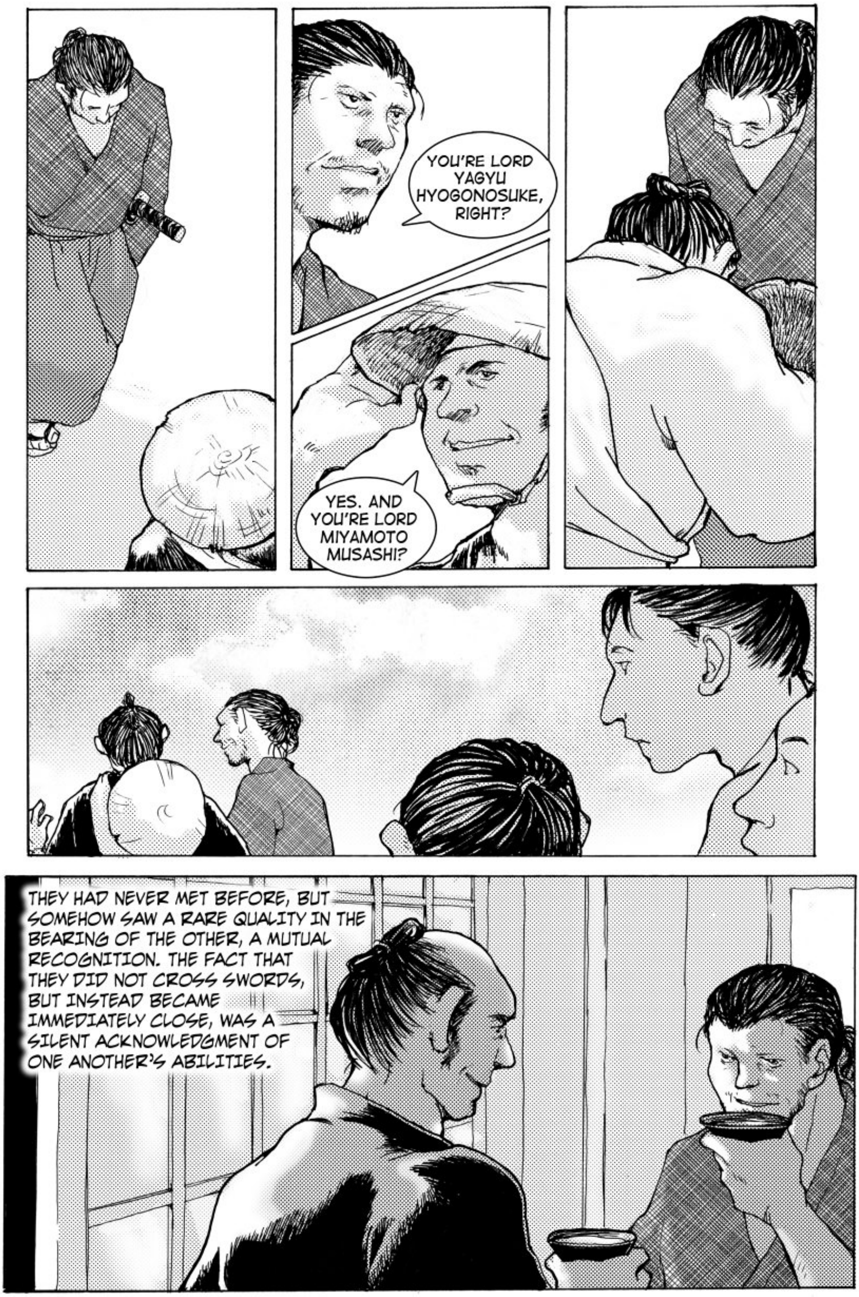

SO, THEN, WHY ARE YOU SHARPENING YOUR SWORD?
SRIICK, SRICK
MY FATHER DIED YESTERDAY. BUT I'M NOT STRONG ENOUGH TO CARRY HIS BODY UP THE HILL BY MYSELF.
SRIICK, SRICK
SO, I THOUGHT I WOULD CUT HIM IN HALF AND TAKE UP THE BODY IN TWO TRIPS SO HE CAN BE BURIED NEXT TO MY MOTHER.
THAT'S VERY IMPRESSIVE. YOU'RE A GOOD SON.
BUT I'M HERE NOW, SO WHY DON'T WE CARRY HIM UP TOGETHER?

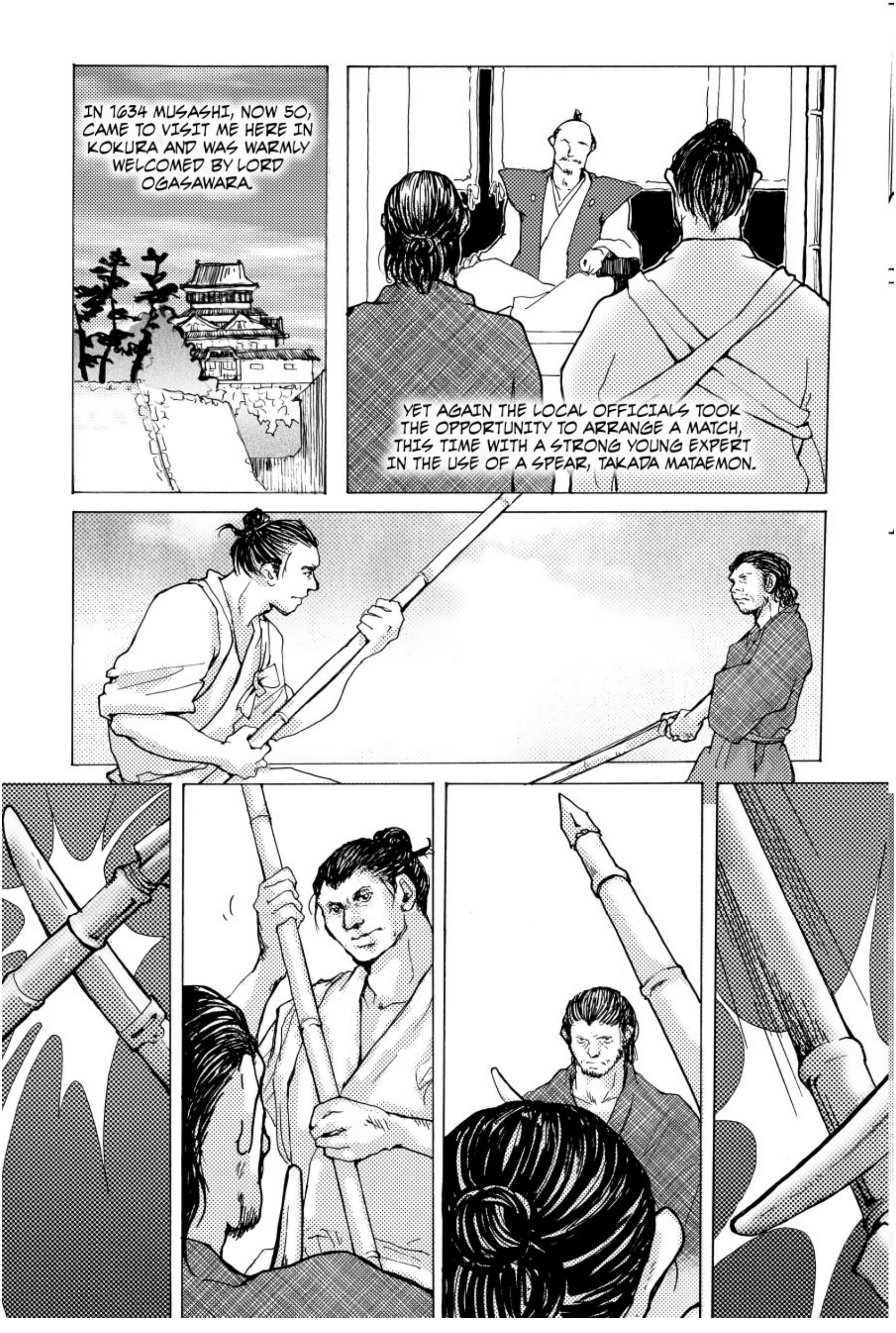

I'M ALONE HERE NOW, SO YOU CAN STAY A WHILE IF YOU WANT.
THANK YOU.
BUT HOW ABOUT THIS: IF YOU COME WITH ME I WILL TEACH YOU THE WAY OF THE WARRIOR.
HMM...
IF I COME I DON'T WANT TO BE YOUR SERVANT. I WANT TO BE A TRUE WARRIOR.
HA, HA.
YOU WILL BE THAT.

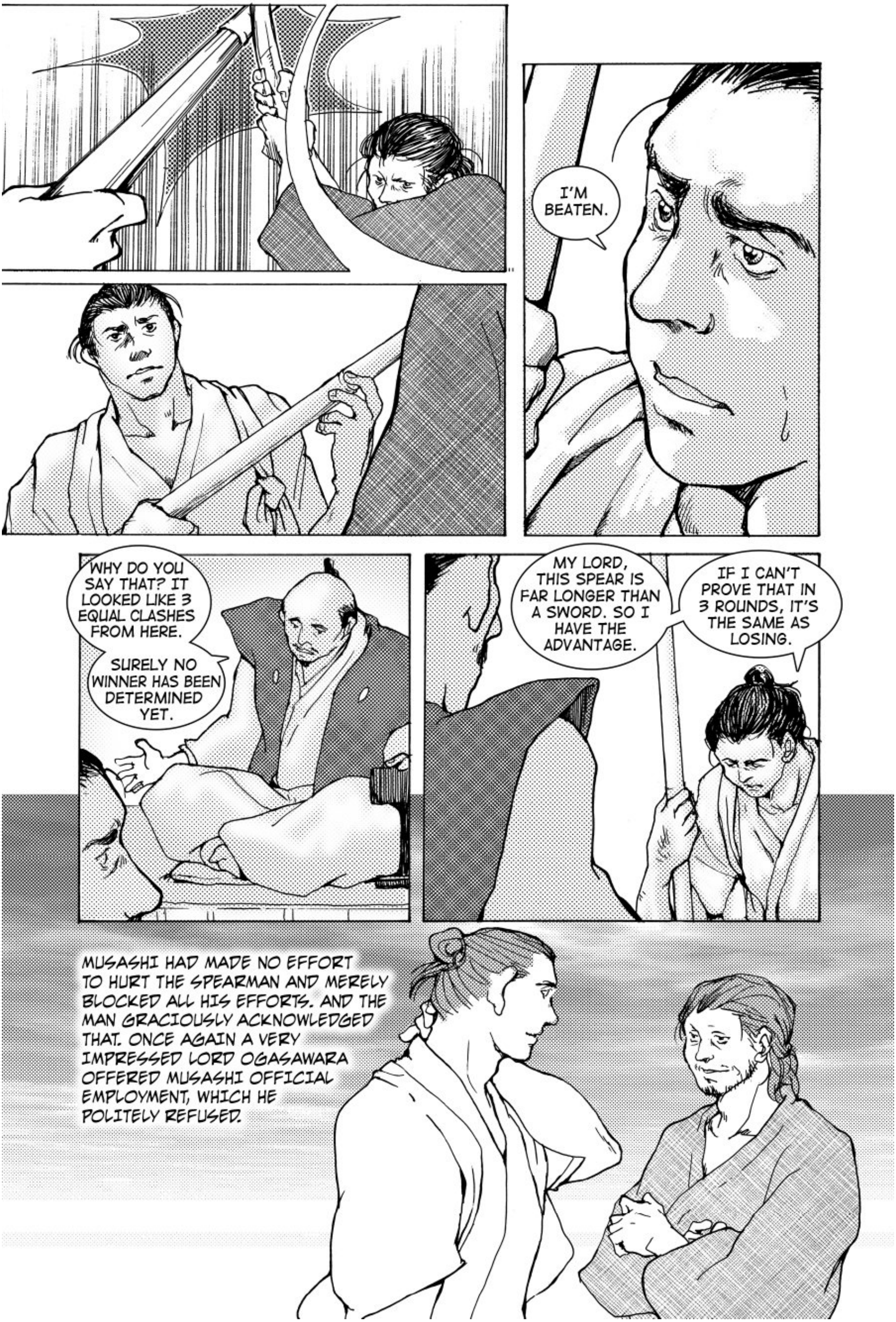

HE WAS TRUE TO HIS WORD.
AND ONLY A FEW YEARS LATER, WHEN MUSASHI WAS OFFERED THE POSITION OF RETAINER TO OGASAWARA TADAZANE, HE PUT ME UP FOR THE POST INSTEAD.
BY THE AGE OF 20, THANKS TO MUSASHI'S TRAINING, I HAD BECOME THE CHIEF RETAINER.
IN 1637 MUSASHI AND I FOUGHT TOGETHER AT THE BATTLE OF SHIMABARA.
LATER MY STIPEND WAS INCREASED TO FOUR THOUSAND KOKU AND I WAS GRANTED SOME LAND HERE ON MOUNT TAMUKE.

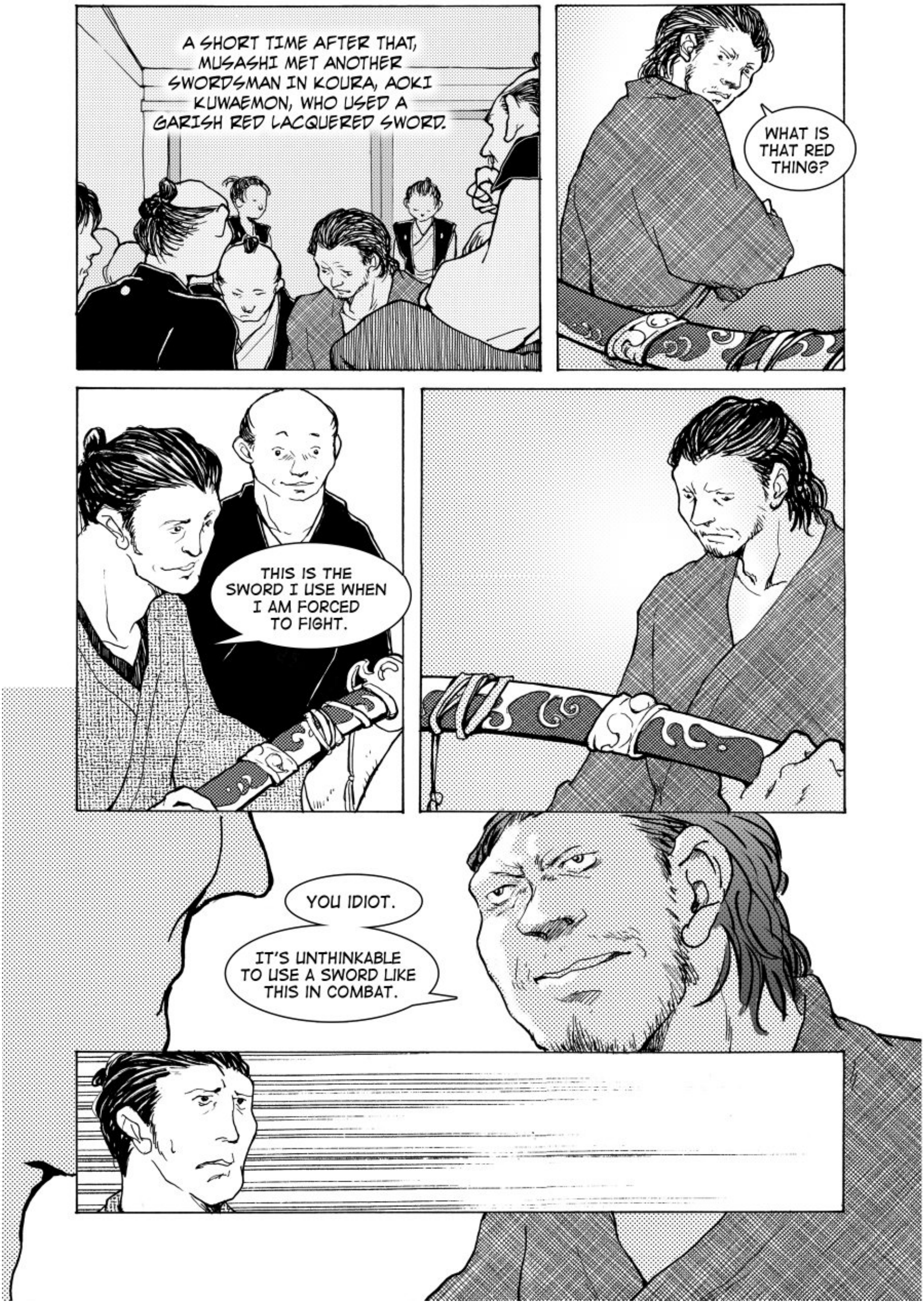


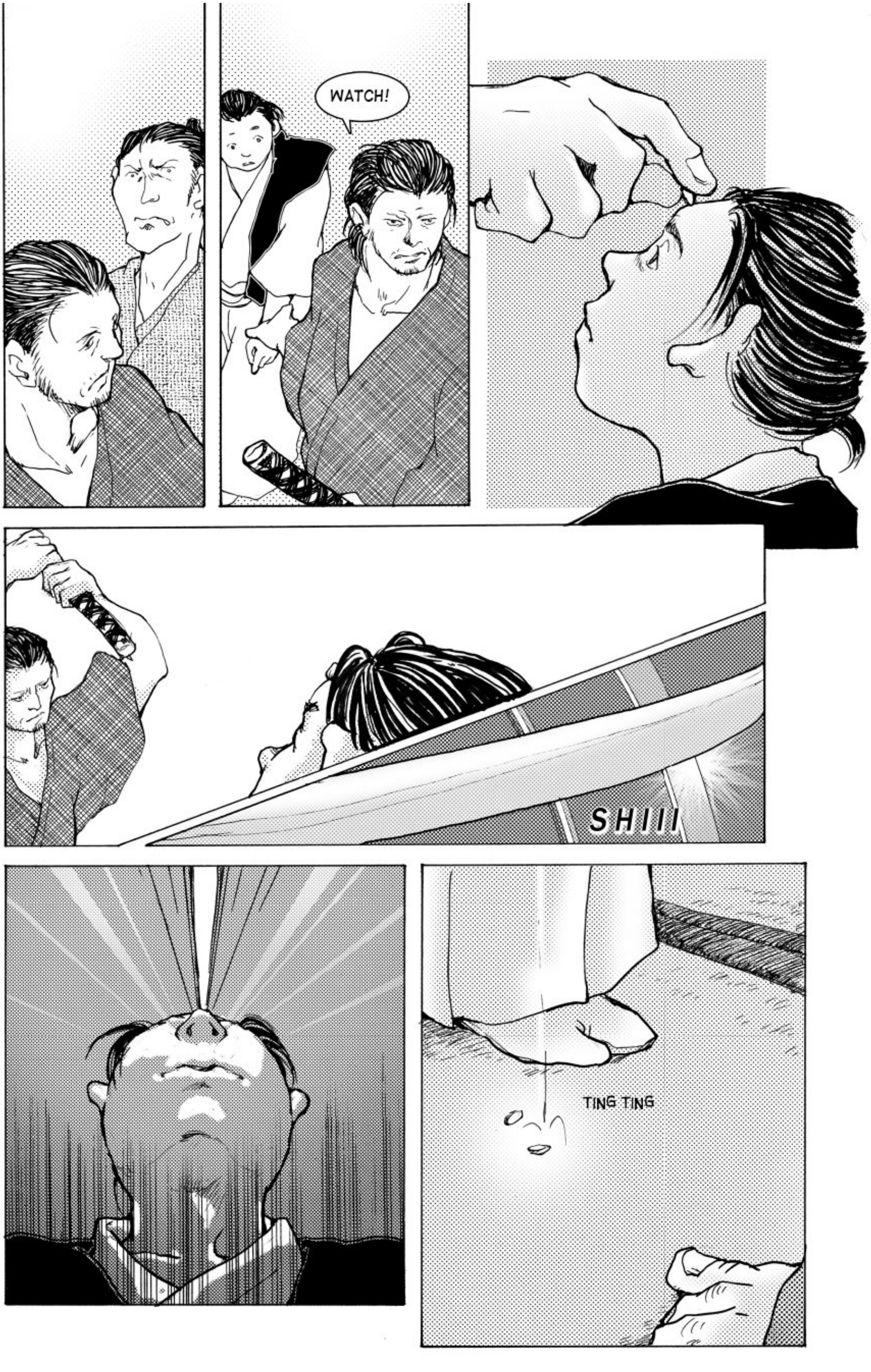

1628 IN NAGOYA.
AT LAST... A REAL HUMAN BEING.

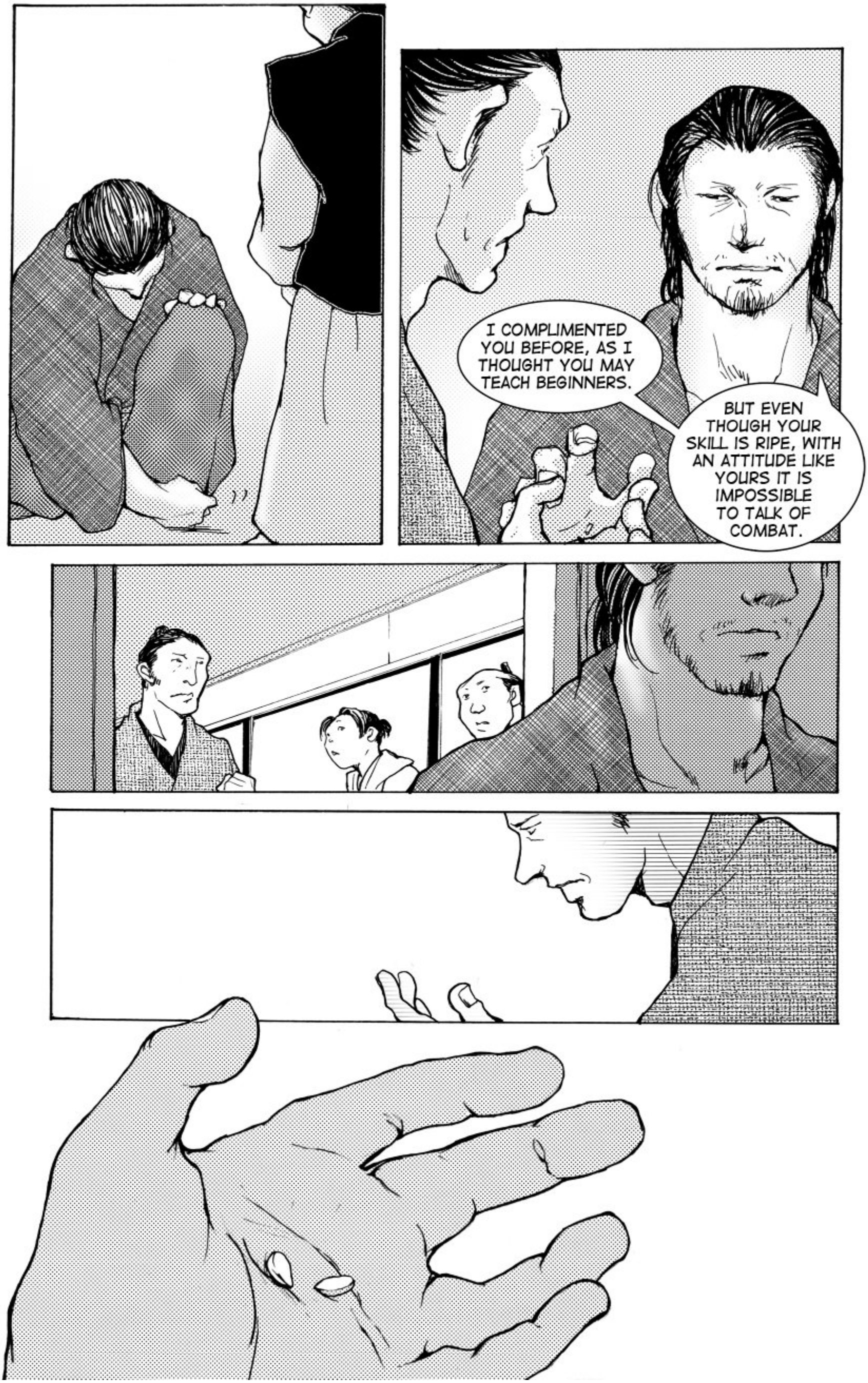

YOU'RE LORD YAGYU HYOGONOSUKE, RIGHT?
YES. AND YOU'RE LORD MIYAMOTO MUSASHI?
THEY HAD NEVER MET BEFORE, BUT SOMEHOW SAW A RARE QUALITY IN THE BEARING OF THE OTHER, A MUTUAL RECOGNITION. THE FACT THAT THEY DID NOT CROSS SWORDS, BUT INSTEAD BECAME IMMEDIATELY CLOSE, WAS A SILENT ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF ONE ANOTHER'S ABILITIES.

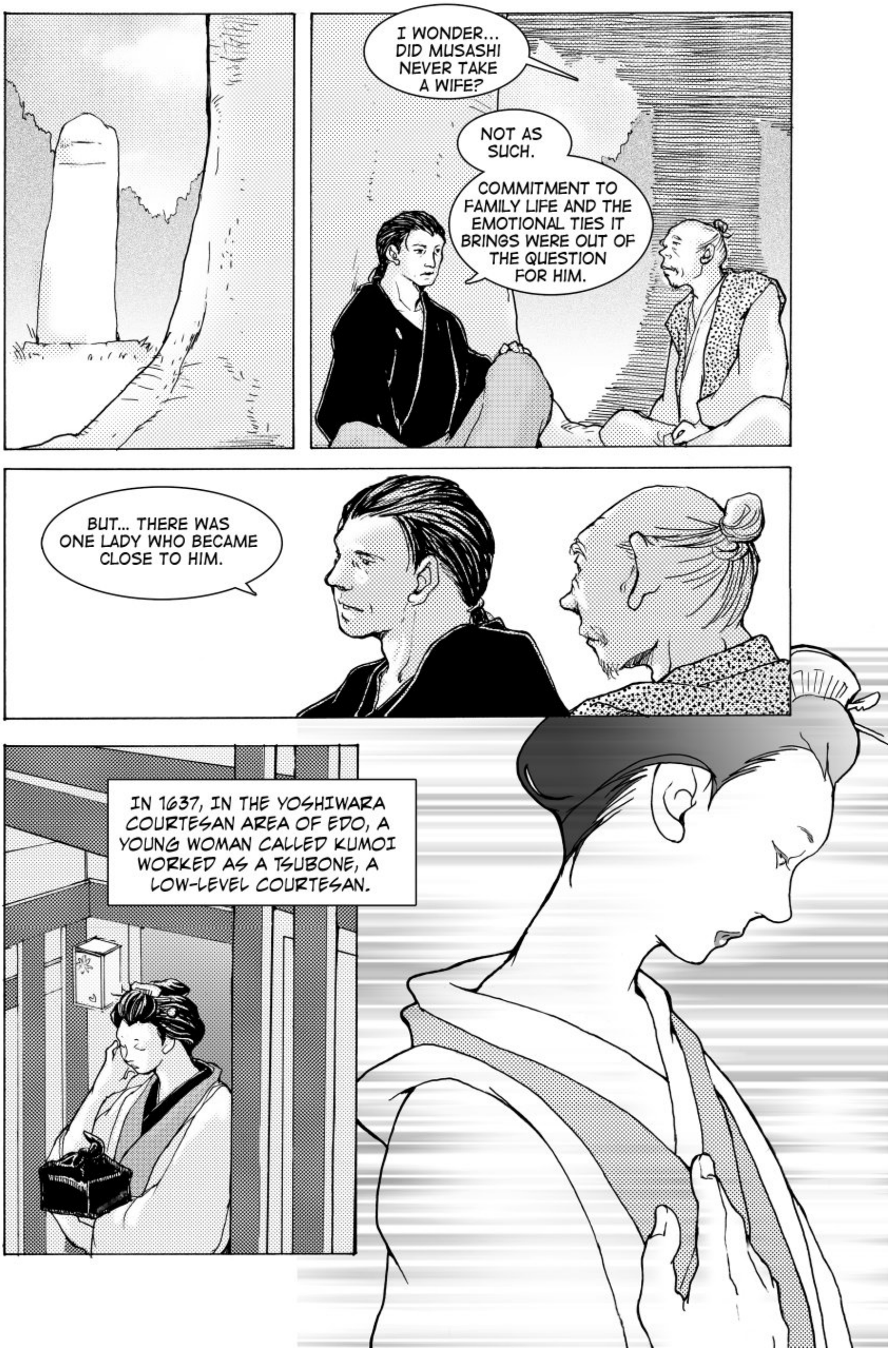

IN 1634 MUSASHI, NOW 50, CAME TO VISIT ME HERE IN KOKURA AND WAS WARMLY WELCOMED BY LORD OGASAWARA.
YET AGAIN THE LOCAL OFFICIALS TOOK THE OPPORTUNITY TO ARRANGE A MATCH, THIS TIME WITH A STRONG YOUNG EXPERT IN THE USE OF A SPEAR, TAKADA MATAEMON.

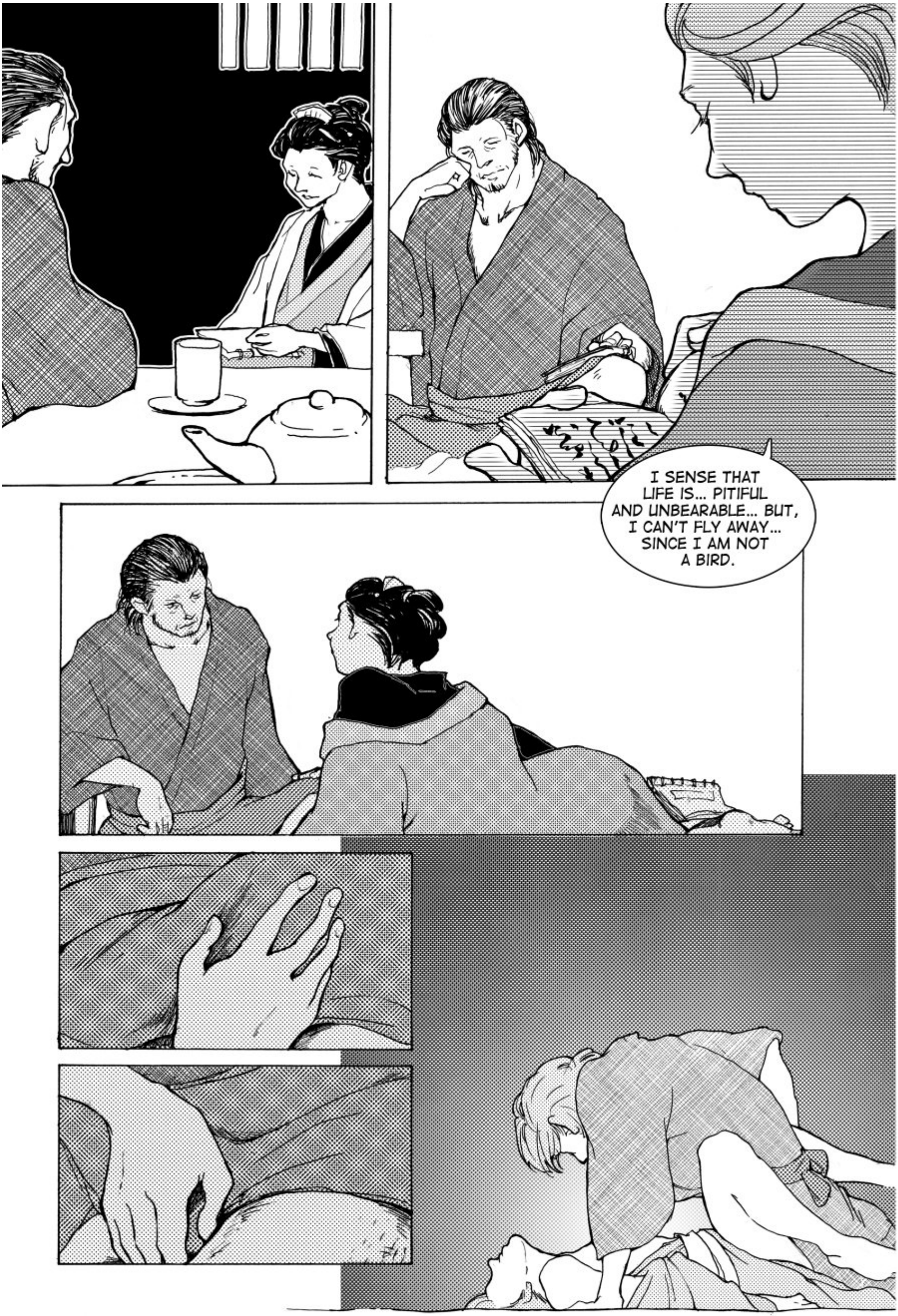

I'M BEATEN.
WHY DO YOU SAY THAT? IT LOOKED LIKE 3 EQUAL CLASHES FROM HERE.
SURELY NO WINNER HAS BEEN DETERMINED YET.
MY LORD, THIS SPEAR IS FAR LONGER THAN A SWORD. SO I HAVE THE ADVANTAGE.
IF I CAN'T PROVE THAT IN 3 ROUNDS, IT'S THE SAME AS LOSING.
MUSASHI HAD MADE NO EFFORT TO HURT THE SPEARMAN AND MERELY BLOCKED ALL HIS EFFORTS. AND THE MAN GRACIOUSLY ACKNOWLEDGED THAT. ONCE AGAIN A VERY IMPRESSED LORD OGASAWARA OFFERED MUSASHI OFFICIAL EMPLOYMENT, WHICH HE POLITELY REFUSED.

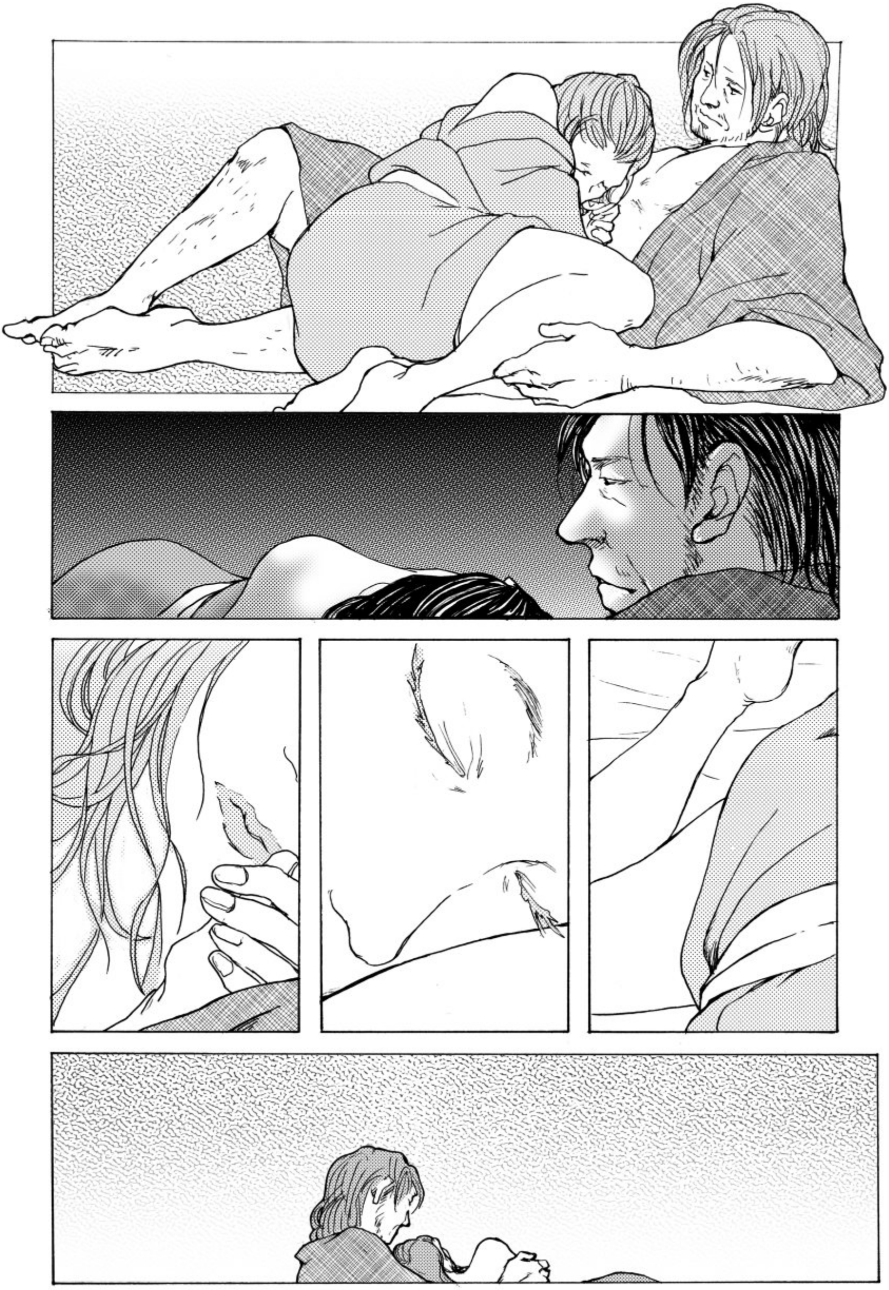

A SHORT TIME AFTER THAT, MUSASHI MET ANOTHER SWORDSMAN IN KOURA, AOKI KUWAEMON, WHO USED A GARISH RED LACQUERED SWORD.
WHAT IS THAT RED THING?
THIS IS THE SWORD I USE WHEN I AM FORCED TO FIGHT.
YOU IDIOT.
IT'S UNTHINKABLE TO USE A SWORD LIKE THIS IN COMBAT.

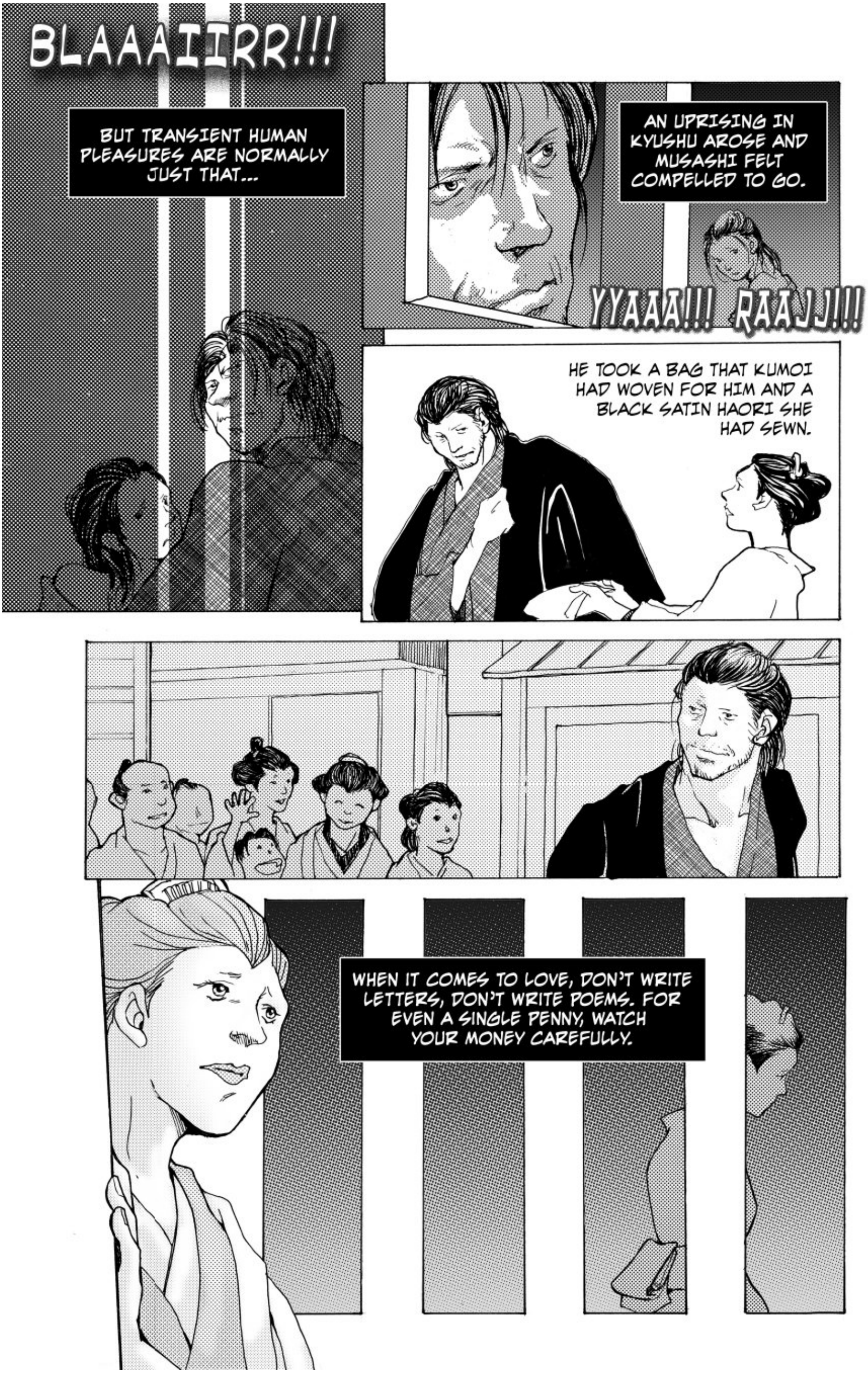

WATCH!
SHIII
TING TING

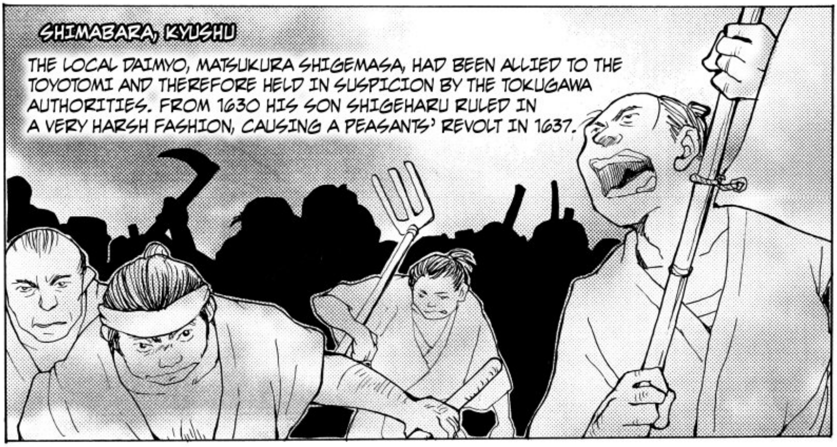

I COMPLIMENTED YOU BEFORE, AS I THOUGHT YOU MAY TEACH BEGINNERS.
BUT EVEN THOUGH YOUR SKILL IS RIPE, WITH AN ATTITUDE LIKE YOURS IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO TALK OF COMBAT.


I WONDER... DID MUSASHI NEVER TAKE A WIFE?
NOT AS SUCH.
COMMITMENT TO FAMILY LIFE AND THE EMOTIONAL TIES IT BRINGS WERE OUT OF THE QUESTION FOR HIM.
BUT... THERE WAS ONE LADY WHO BECAME CLOSE TO HIM.
IN 1637, IN THE YOSHIWARA COURTESAN AREA OF EDO, A YOUNG WOMAN CALLED KUMOI WORKED AS A TSUBONE, A LOW-LEVEL COURTESAN.


I SENSE THAT LIFE IS... PITIFUL AND UNBEARABLE... BUT, I CAN'T FLY AWAY... SINCE I AM NOT A BIRD.

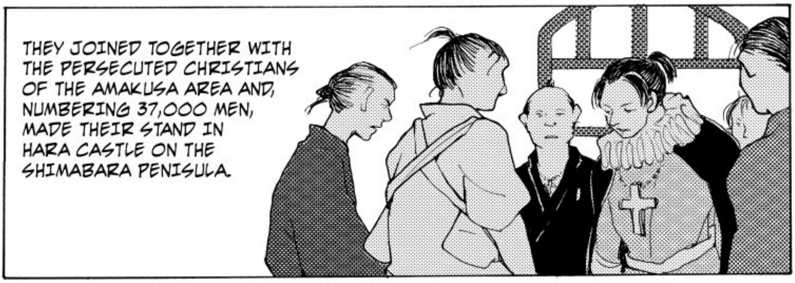



BLAAAIIRR!!!
BUT TRANSIENT HUMAN PLEASURES ARE NORMALLY JUST THAT...
AN UPRISING IN KYUSHU AROSE AND MUSASHI FELT COMPELLED TO GO.
YYAAA!!! RAAJJ!!!
HE TOOK A BAG THAT KUMOI HAD WOVEN FOR HIM AND A BLACK SATIN HAORI SHE HAD SEWN.
WHEN IT COMES TO LOVE, DON'T WRITE LETTERS, DON'T WRITE POEMS. FOR EVEN A SINGLE PENNY, WATCH YOUR MONEY CAREFULLY.

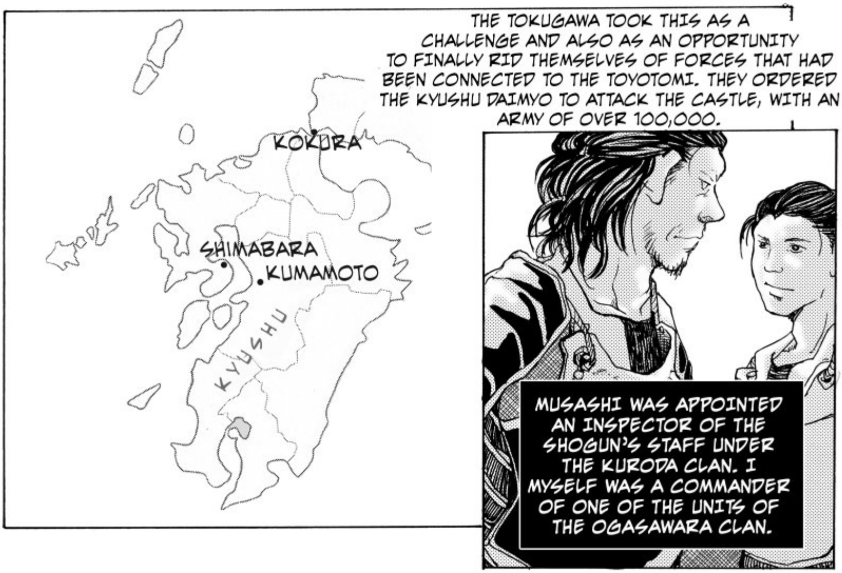


SHIMABARA, KYUSHU

THE LOCAL DAIMYO, MATSUKURA SHIGEMASA, HAD BEEN ALLIED TO THE TOYOTOMI AND THEREFORE HELD IN SUSPICION BY THE TOKUGAWA AUTHORITIES. FROM 1630 HIS SON SHIGEHARU RULED IN A VERY HARSH FASHION, CAUSING A PEASANTS' REVOLT IN 1637.

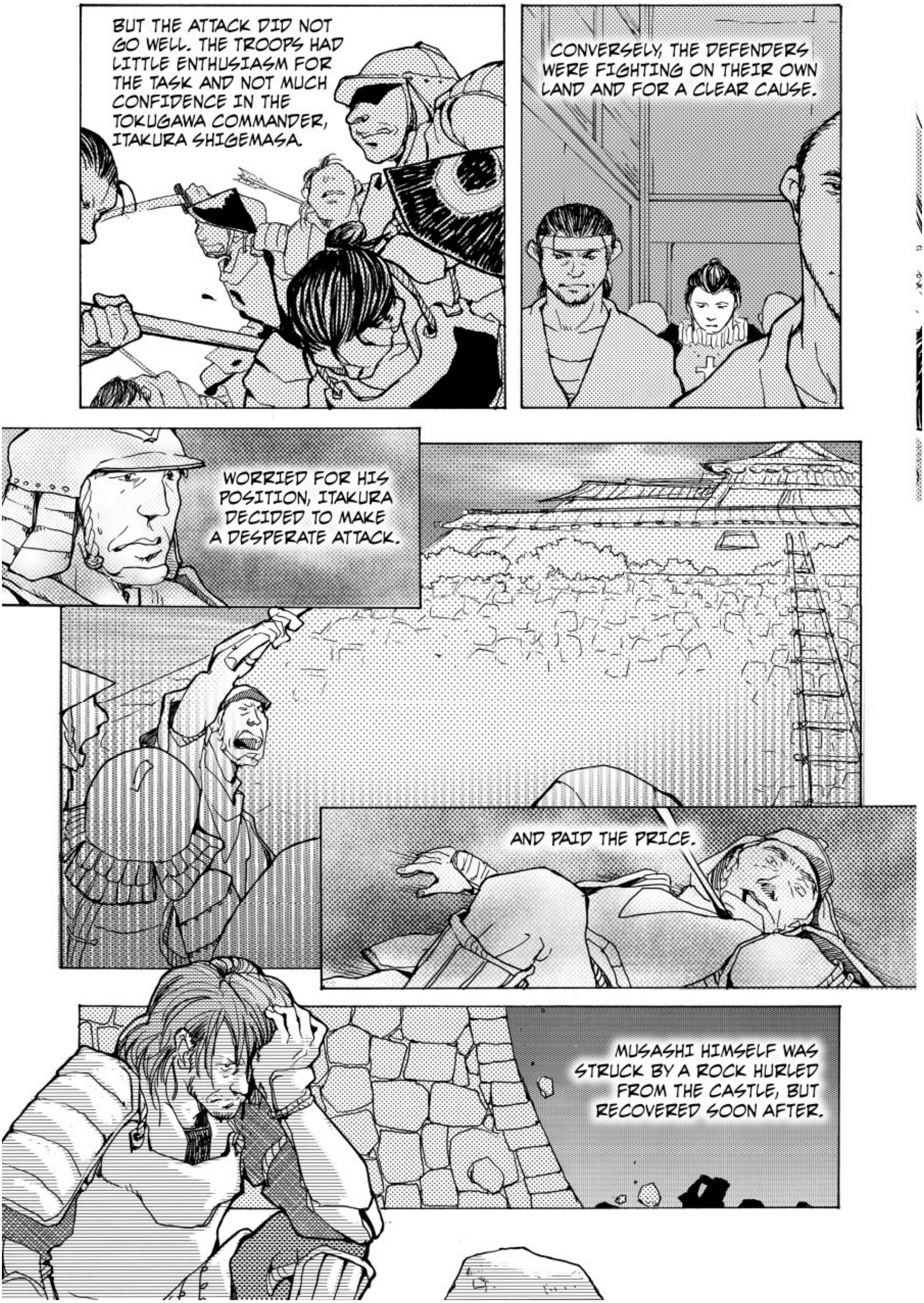


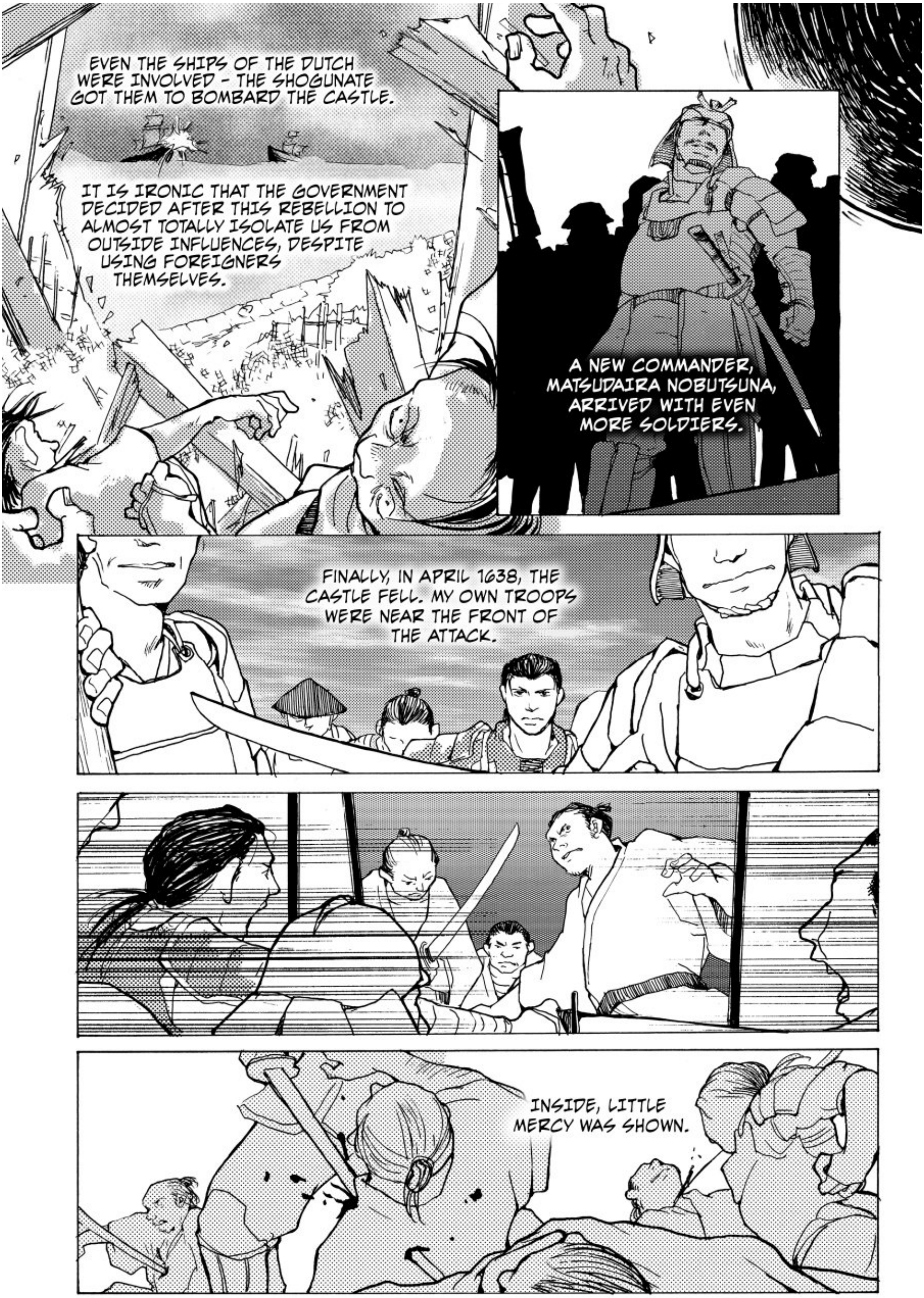
THEY JOINED TOGETHER WITH THE PERSECUTED CHRISTIANS OF THE AMAKUSA AREA AND, NUMBERING 37,000 MEN, MADE THEIR STAND IN HARA CASTLE ON THE SHIMABARA PENISULA.

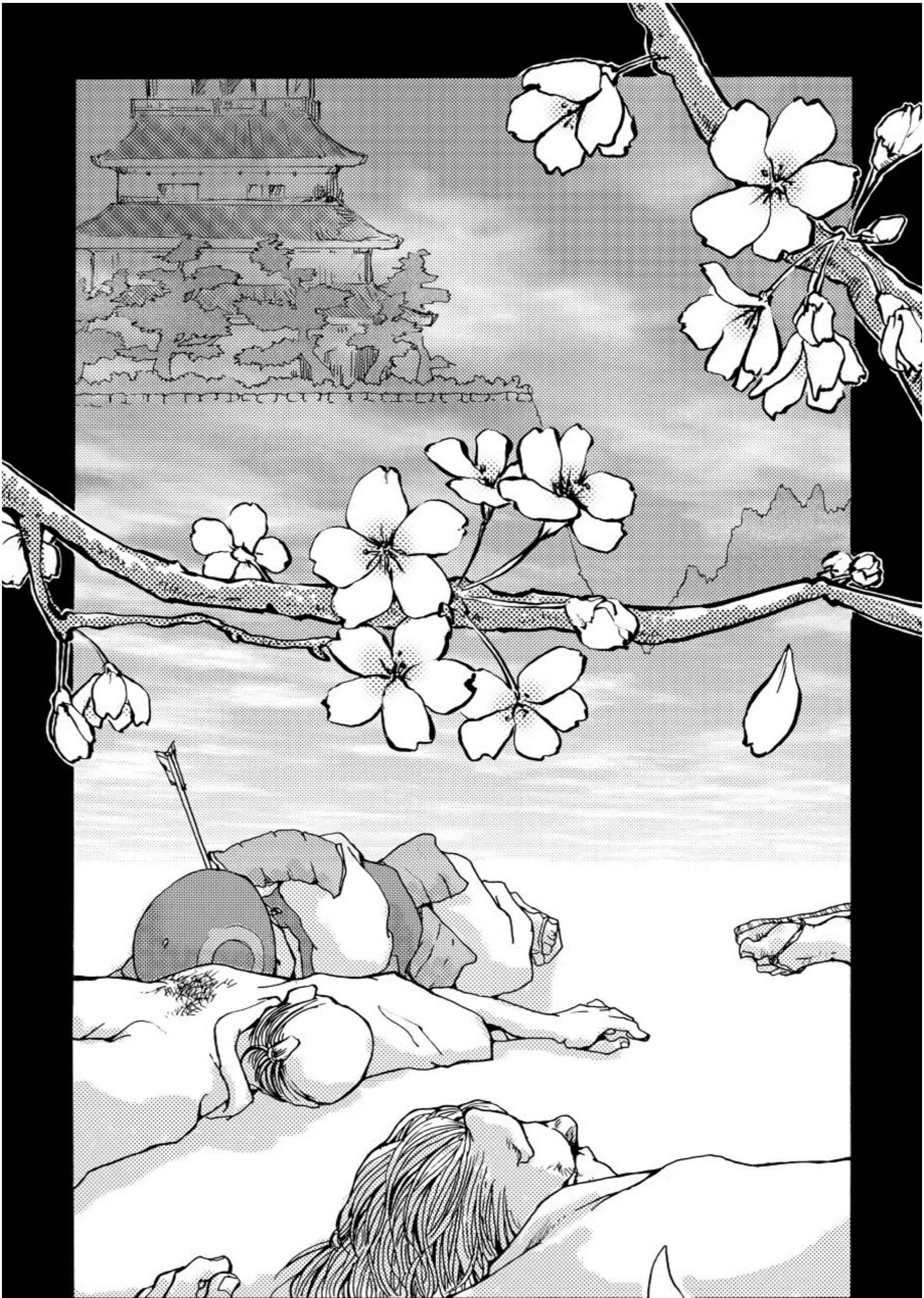


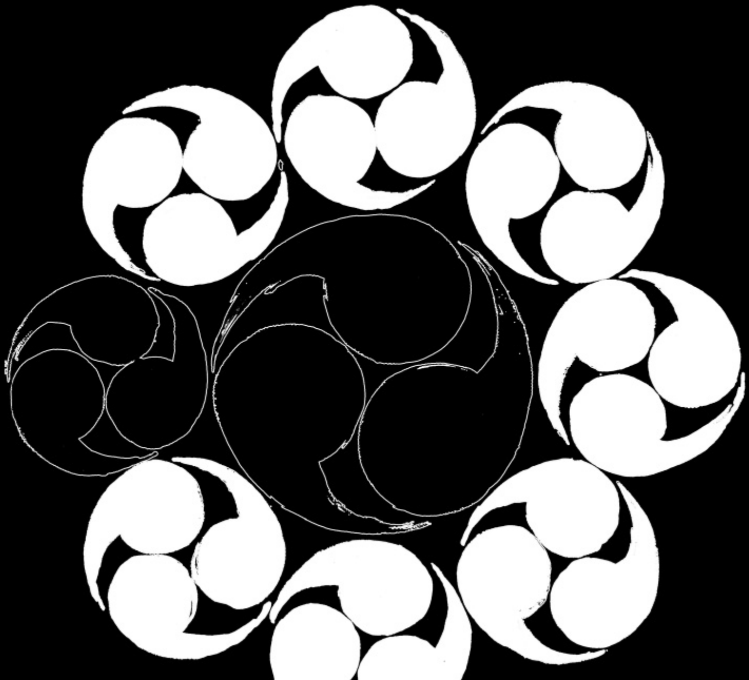
THE TOKUGAWA TOOK THIS AS A CHALLENGE AND ALSO AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO FINALLY RID THEMSELVES OF FORCES THAT HAD BEEN CONNECTED TO THE TOYOTOMI. THEY ORDERED THE KYUSHU DAIMYO TO ATTACK THE CASTLE, WITH AN ARMY OF OVER 100,000.

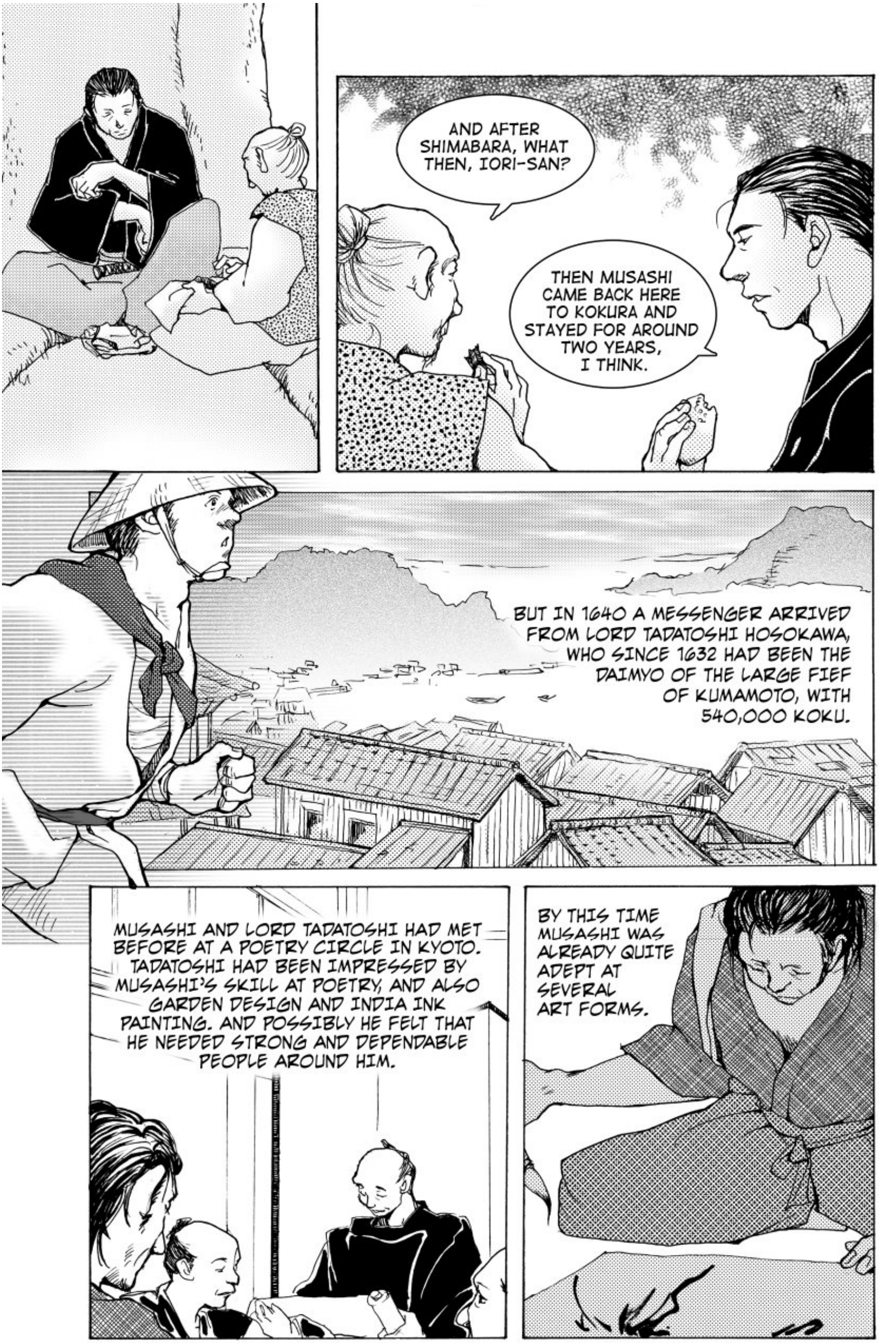
MUSASHI WAS APPOINTED AN INSPECTOR OF THE SHOGUN'S STAFF UNDER THE KURODA CLAN. I MYSELF WAS A COMMANDER OF ONE OF THE UNITS OF THE OGASAWARA CLAN.

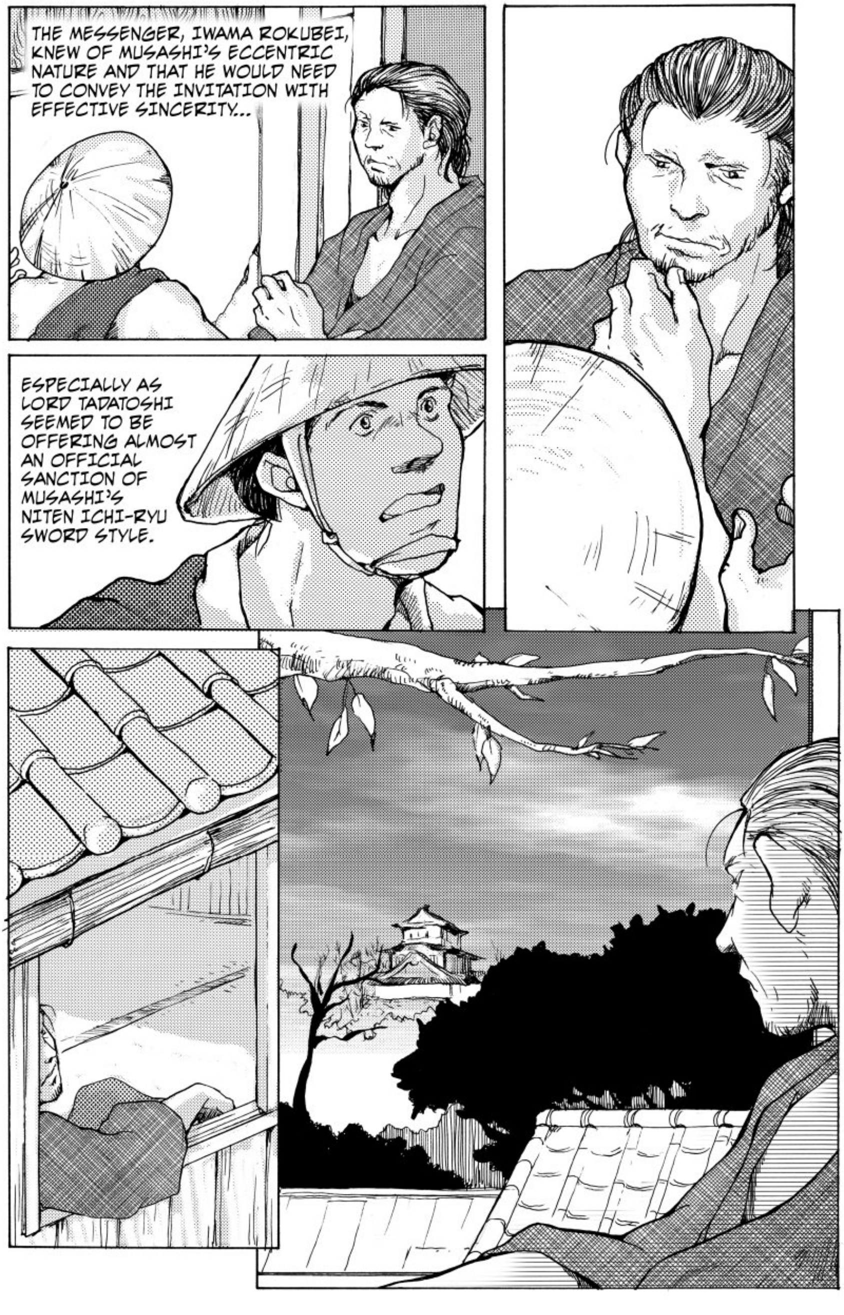

BUT THE ATTACK DID NOT GO WELL. THE TROOPS HAD LITTLE ENTHUSIASM FOR THE TASK AND NOT MUCH CONFIDENCE IN THE TOKUGAWA COMMANDER, ITAKURA SHIGEMASA.
CONVERSELY, THE DEFENDERS WERE FIGHTING ON THEIR OWN LAND AND FOR A CLEAR CAUSE.
WORRIED FOR HIS POSITION, ITAKURA DECIDED TO MAKE A DESPERATE ATTACK.
AND PAID THE PRICE.
MUSASHI HIMSELF WAS STRUCK BY A ROCK HURLED FROM THE CASTLE, BUT RECOVERED SOON AFTER.

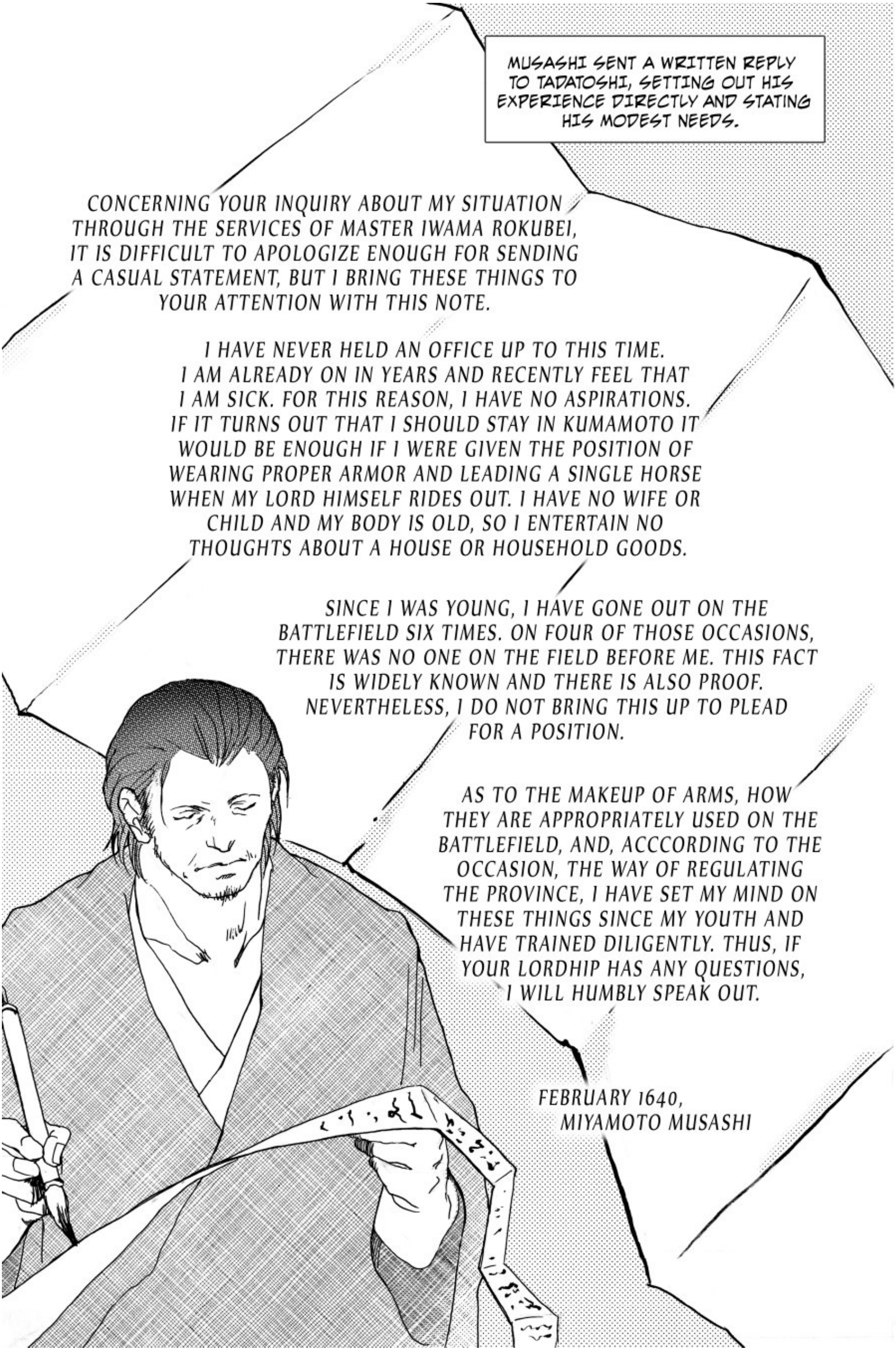

EVEN THE SHIPS OF THE DUTCH WERE INVOLVED - THE SHOGUNATE GOT THEM TO BOMBARD THE CASTLE.
IT IS IRONIC THAT THE GOVERNMENT DECIDED AFTER THIS REBELLION TO ALMOST TOTALLY ISOLATE US FROM OUTSIDE INFLUENCES, DESPITE USING FOREIGNERS THEMSELVES.
A NEW COMMANDER, MATSUDAIRA NOBUTSUNA, ARRIVED WITH EVEN MORE SOLDIERS.
FINALLY, IN APRIL 1638, THE CASTLE FELL. MY OWN TROOPS WERE NEAR THE FRONT OF THE ATTACK.
INSIDE, LITTLE MERCY WAS SHOWN.

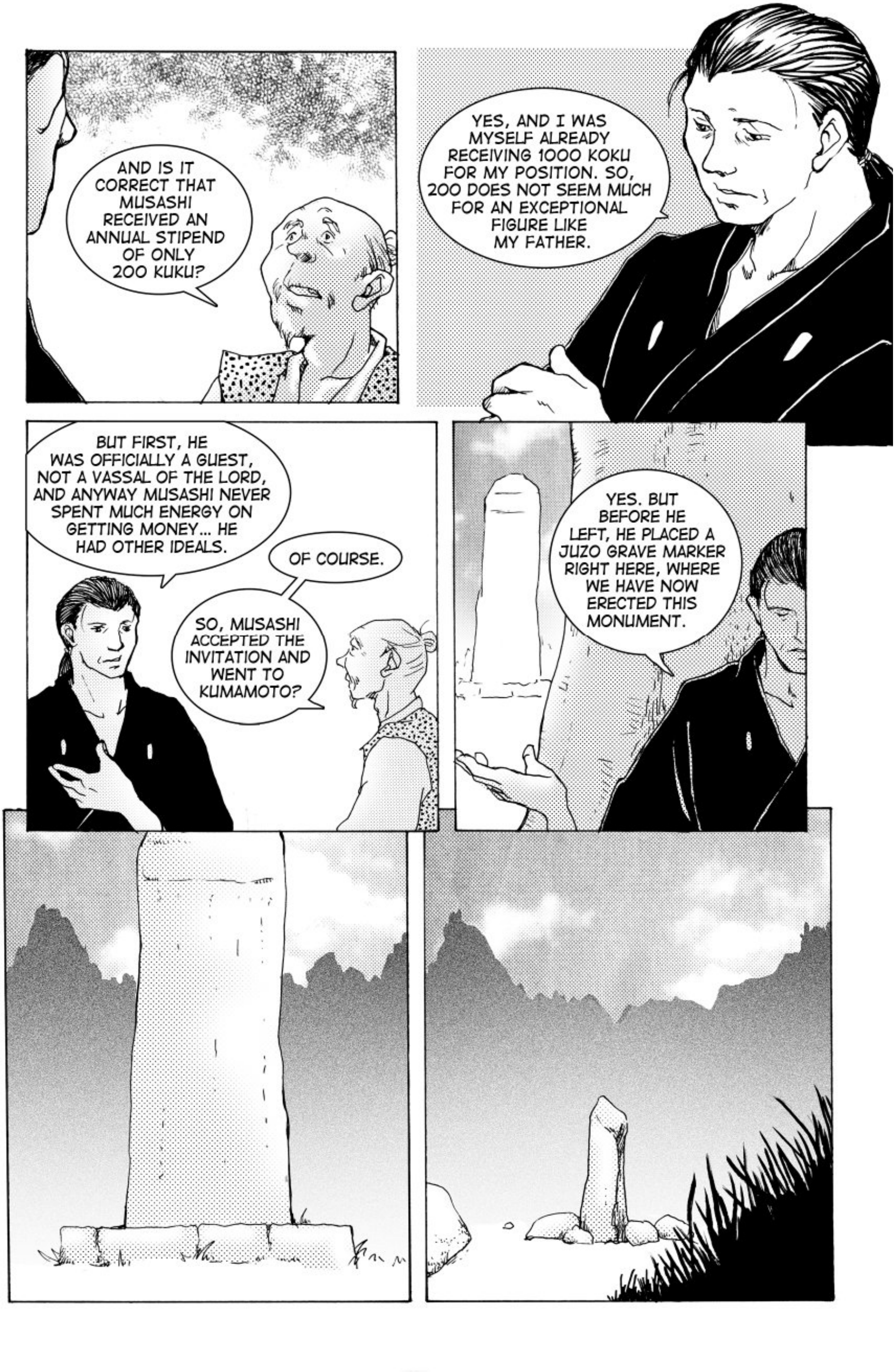


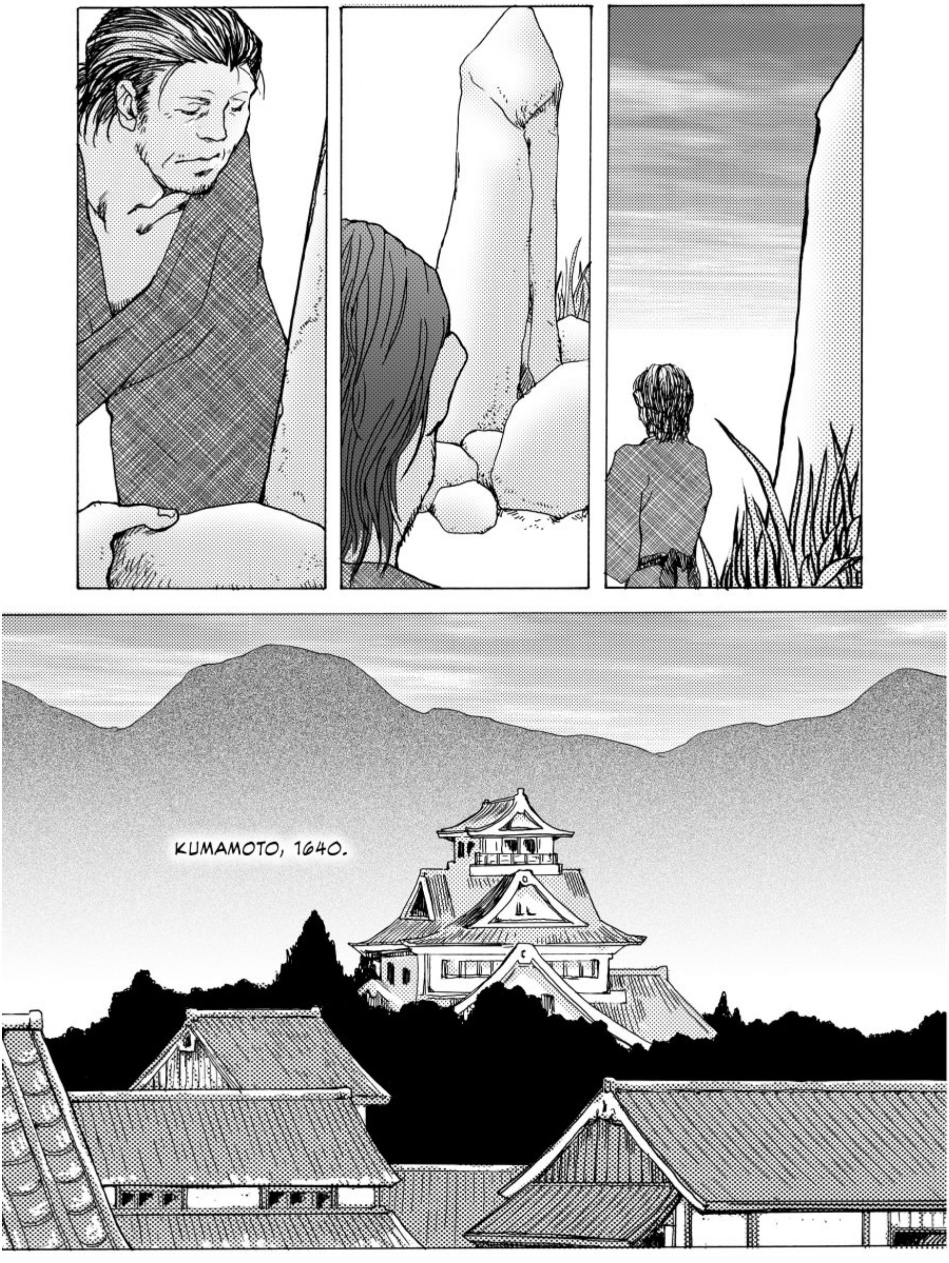


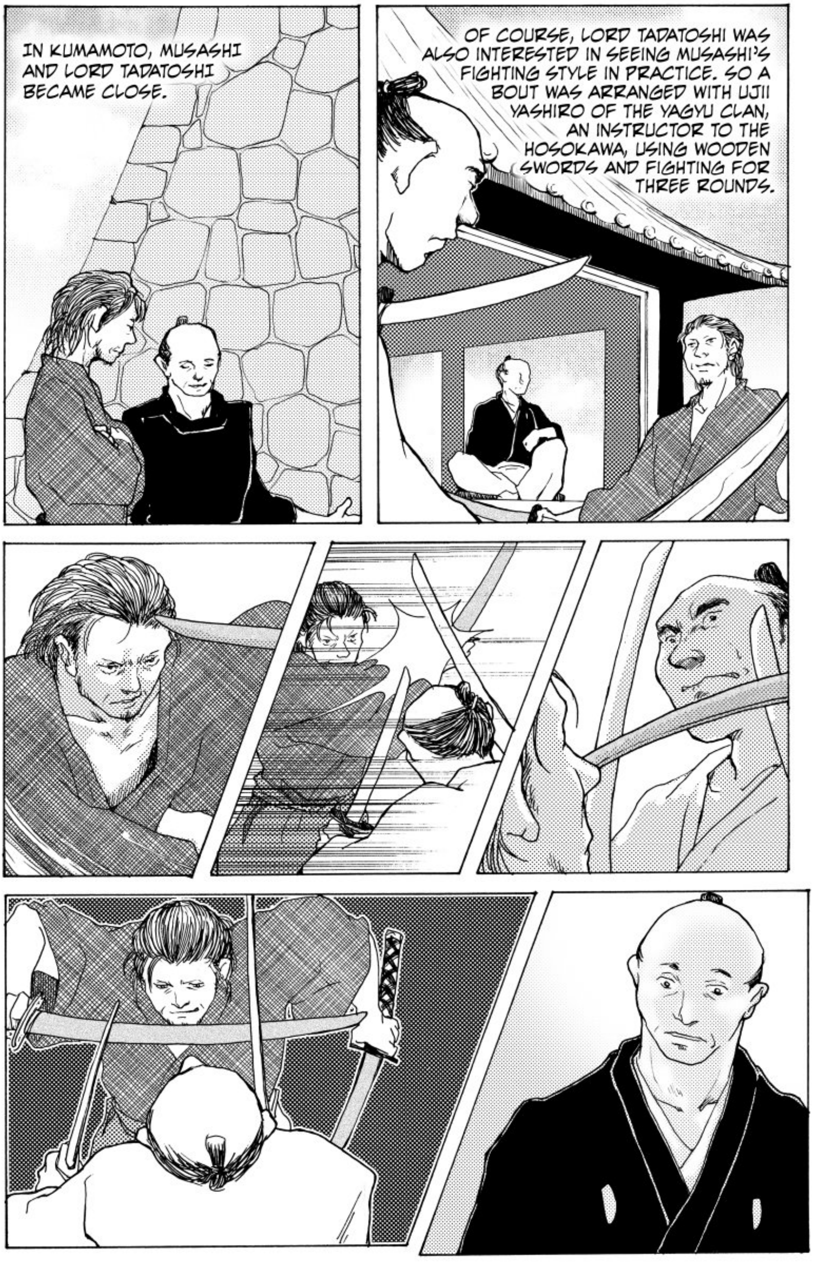

AND AFTER SHIMABARA, WHAT THEN, IORI-SAN?
THEN MUSASHI CAME BACK HERE TO KOKURA AND STAYED FOR AROUND TWO YEARS, I THINK.
BUT IN 1640 A MESSENGER ARRIVED FROM LORD TADATOSHI HOSOKAWA, WHO SINCE 1632 HAD BEEN THE DAIMYO OF THE LARGE FIEF OF KUMAMOTO, WITH 540,000 KOKU.
MUSASHI AND LORD TADATOSHI HAD MET BEFORE AT A POETRY CIRCLE IN KYOTO. TADATOSHI HAD BEEN IMPRESSED BY MUSASHI'S SKILL AT POETRY, AND ALSO GARDEN DESIGN AND INDIA INK PAINTING. AND POSSIBLY HE FELT THAT HE NEEDED STRONG AND DEPENDABLE PEOPLE AROUND HIM.
BY THIS TIME MUSASHI WAS ALREADY QUITE ADEPT AT SEVERAL ART FORMS.

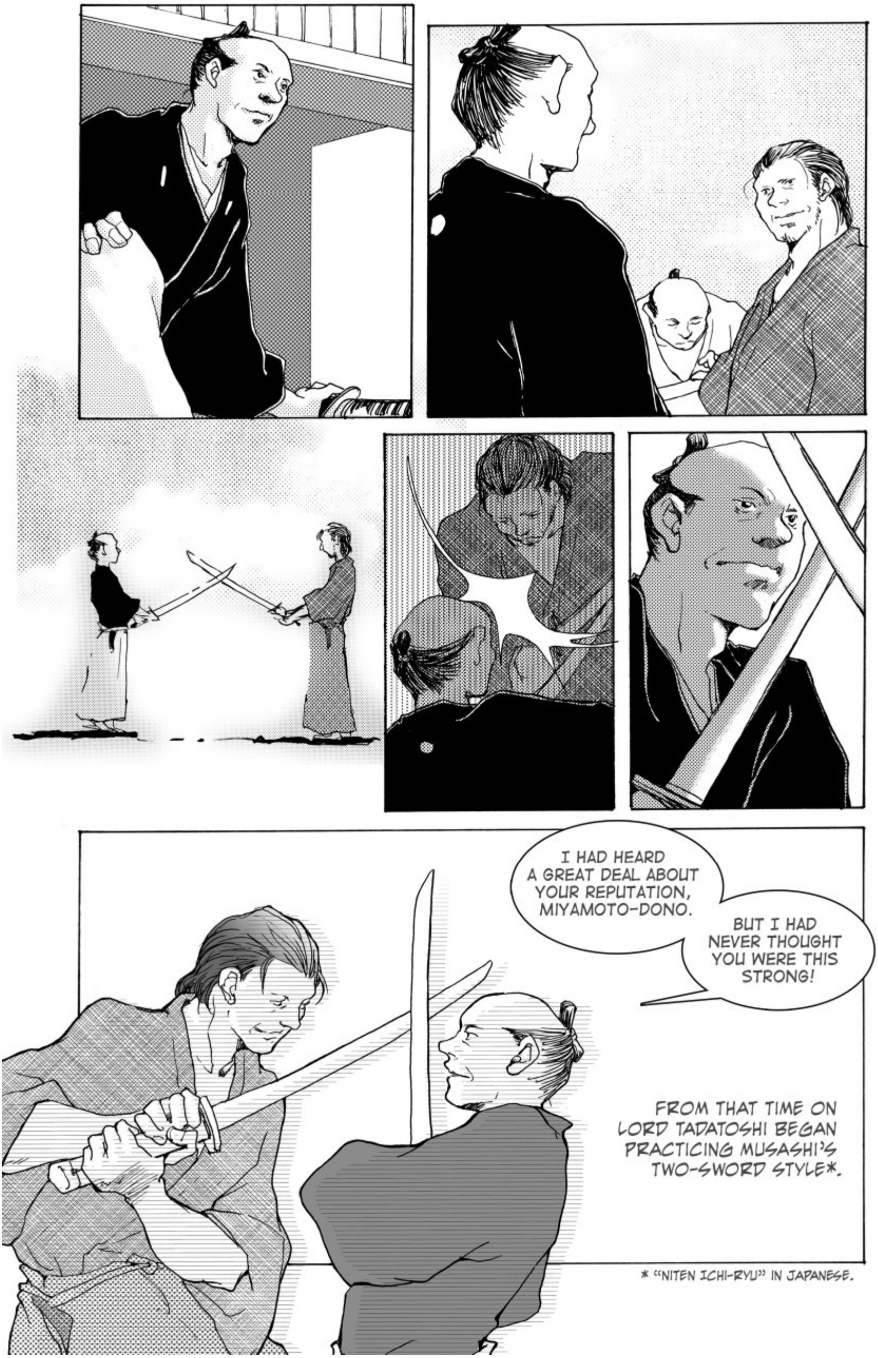

THE MESSENGER, IWAMA ROKUBEI, KNEW OF MUSASHI'S ECCENTRIC NATURE AND THAT HE WOULD NEED TO CONVEY THE INVITATION WITH EFFECTIVE SINCERITY...
ESPECIALLY AS LORD TADATOSHI SEEMED TO BE OFFERING ALMOST AN OFFICIAL SANCTION OF MUSASHI'S NITEN ICHI-RYU SWORD STYLE.


MUSASHI SENT A WRITTEN REPLY TO TADATOSHI, SETTING OUT HIS EXPERIENCE DIRECTLY AND STATING HIS MODEST NEEDS.
CONCERNING YOUR INQUIRY ABOUT MY SITUATION THROUGH THE SERVICES OF MASTER IWAMA ROKUBEI, IT IS DIFFICULT TO APOLOGIZE ENOUGH FOR SENDING A CASUAL STATEMENT, BUT I BRING THESE THINGS TO YOUR ATTENTION WITH THIS NOTE.
I HAVE NEVER HELD AN OFFICE UP TO THIS TIME. I AM ALREADY ON IN YEARS AND RECENTLY FEEL THAT I AM SICK. FOR THIS REASON, I HAVE NO ASPIRATIONS. IF IT TURNS OUT THAT I SHOULD STAY IN KUMAMOTO IT WOULD BE ENOUGH IF I WERE GIVEN THE POSITION OF WEARING PROPER ARMOR AND LEADING A SINGLE HORSE WHEN MY LORD HIMSELF RIDES OUT. I HAVE NO WIFE OR CHILD AND MY BODY IS OLD, SO I ENTERTAIN NO THOUGHTS ABOUT A HOUSE OR HOUSEHOLD GOODS.
SINCE I WAS YOUNG, I HAVE GONE OUT ON THE BATTLEFIELD SIX TIMES. ON FOUR OF THOSE OCCASIONS, THERE WAS NO ONE ON THE FIELD BEFORE ME. THIS FACT IS WIDELY KNOWN AND THERE IS ALSO PROOF. NEVERTHELESS, I DO NOT BRING THIS UP TO PLEAD FOR A POSITION.
AS TO THE MAKEUP OF ARMS, HOW THEY ARE APPROPRIATELY USED ON THE BATTLEFIELD, AND, ACCCORDING TO THE OCCASION, THE WAY OF REGULATING THE PROVINCE, I HAVE SET MY MIND ON THESE THINGS SINCE MY YOUTH AND HAVE TRAINED DILIGENTLY. THUS, IF YOUR LORDHIP HAS ANY QUESTIONS, I WILL HUMBLY SPEAK OUT.
FEBRUARY 1640, MIYAMOTO MUSASHI

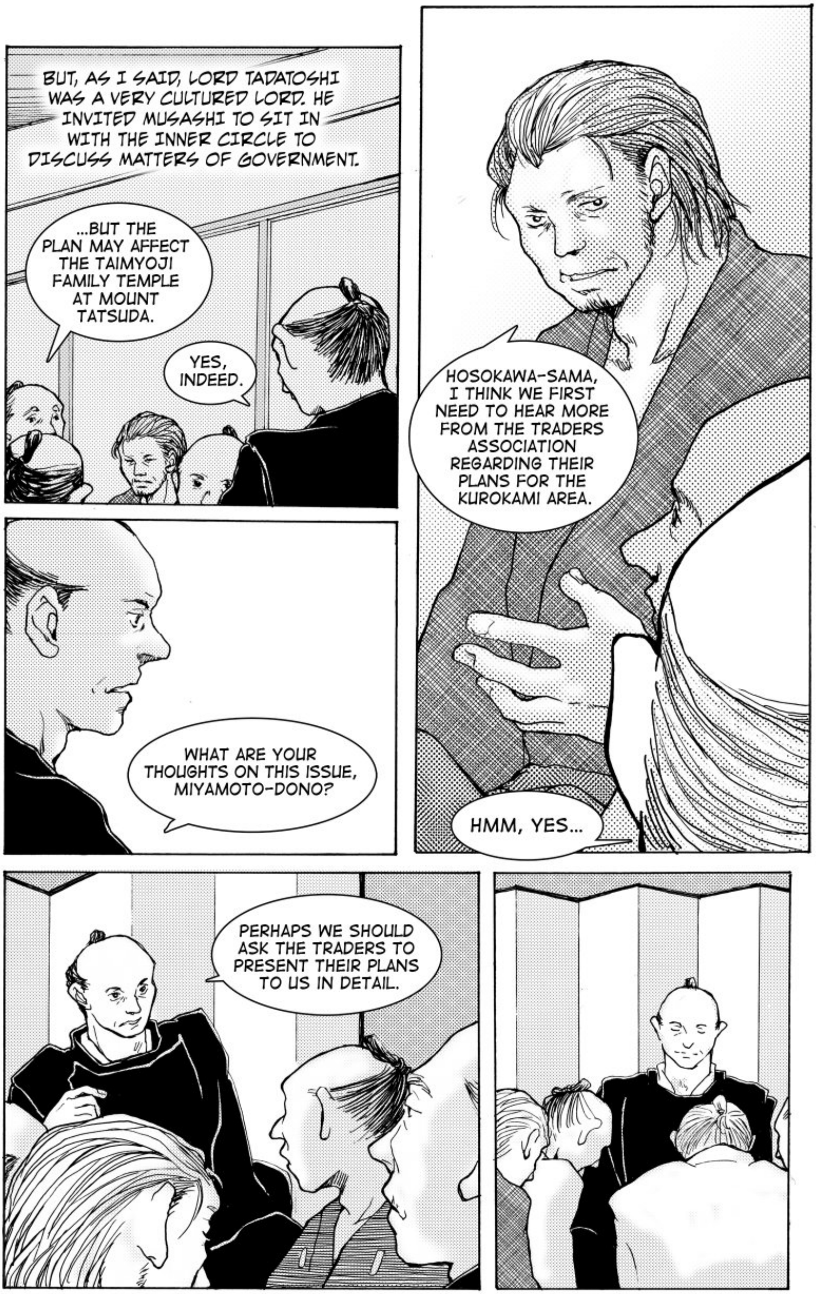

AND IS IT CORRECT THAT MUSASHI RECEIVED AN ANNUAL STIPEND OF ONLY 200 KUKU?
YES, AND I WAS MYSELF ALREADY RECEIVING 1000 KOKU FOR MY POSITION. SO, 200 DOES NOT SEEM MUCH FOR AN EXCEPTIONAL FIGURE LIKE MY FATHER.
BUT FIRST, HE WAS OFFICIALLY A GUEST, NOT A VASSAL OF THE LORD, AND ANYWAY MUSASHI NEVER SPENT MUCH ENERGY ON GETTING MONEY... HE HAD OTHER IDEALS.
OF COURSE.
SO, MUSASHI ACCEPTED THE INVITATION AND WENT TO KUMAMOTO?
YES. BUT BEFORE HE LEFT, HE PLACED A JUZO GRAVE MARKER RIGHT HERE, WHERE WE HAVE NOW ERECTED THIS MONUMENT.

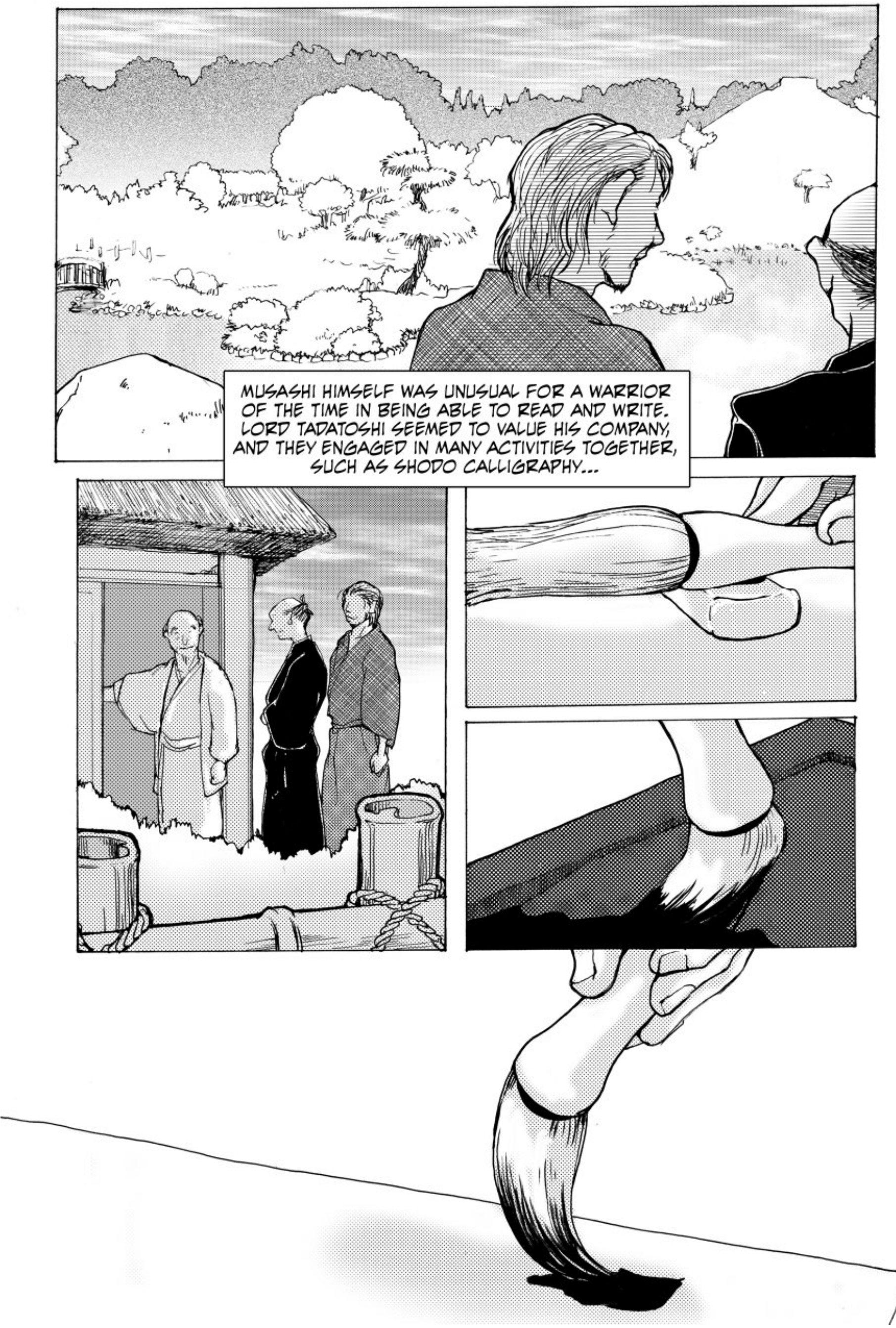

KUMAMOTO, 1640.

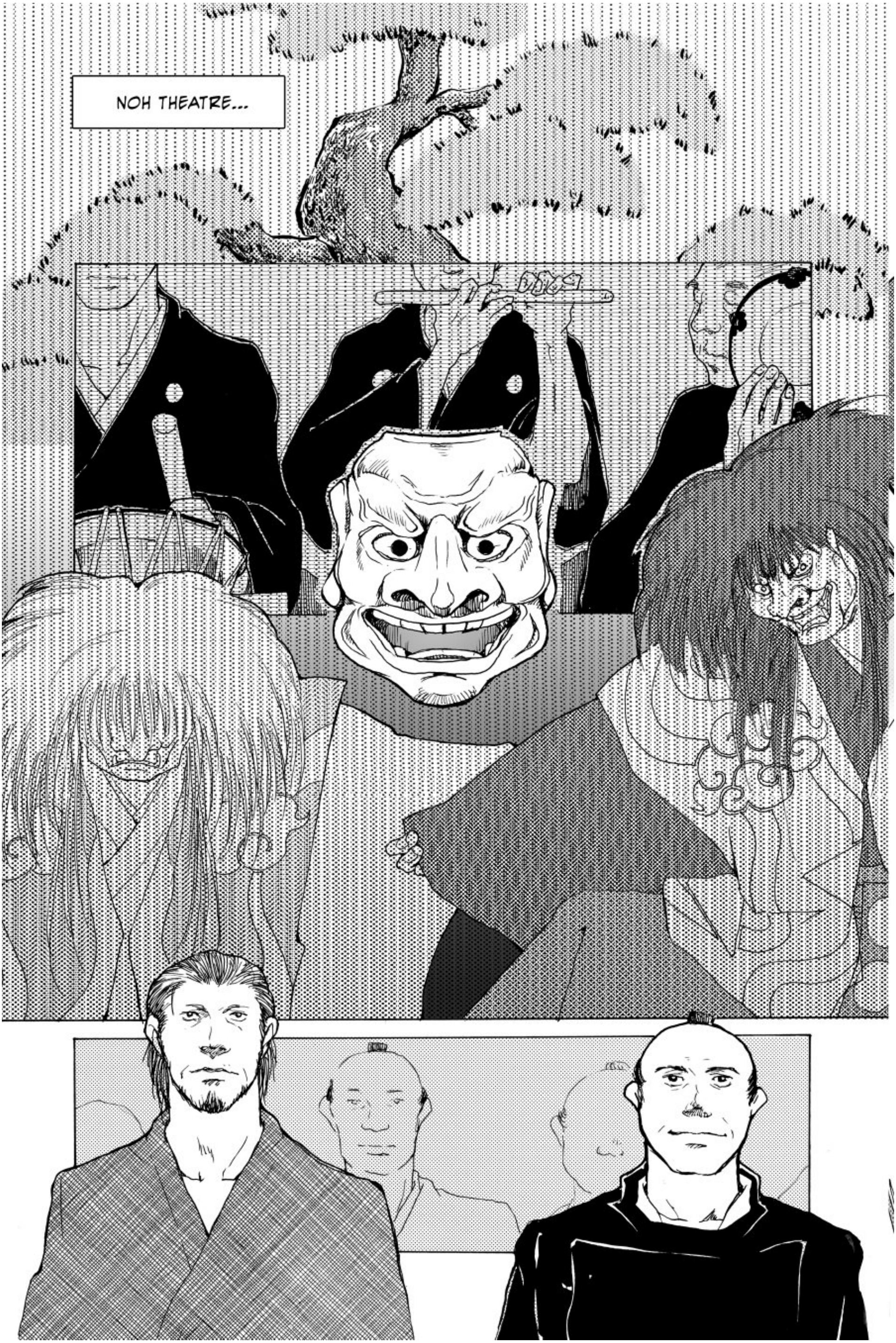

IN KUMAMOTO, MUSASHI AND LORD TADATOSHI BECAME CLOSE.
OF COURSE, LORD TADATOSHI WAS ALSO INTERESTED IN SEEING MUSASHI'S FIGHTING STYLE IN PRACTICE. SO A BOUT WAS ARRANGED WITH UJII YASHIRO OF THE YAGYU CLAN, AN INSTRUCTOR TO THE HOSOKAWA, USING WOODEN SWORDS AND FIGHTING FOR THREE ROUNDS.

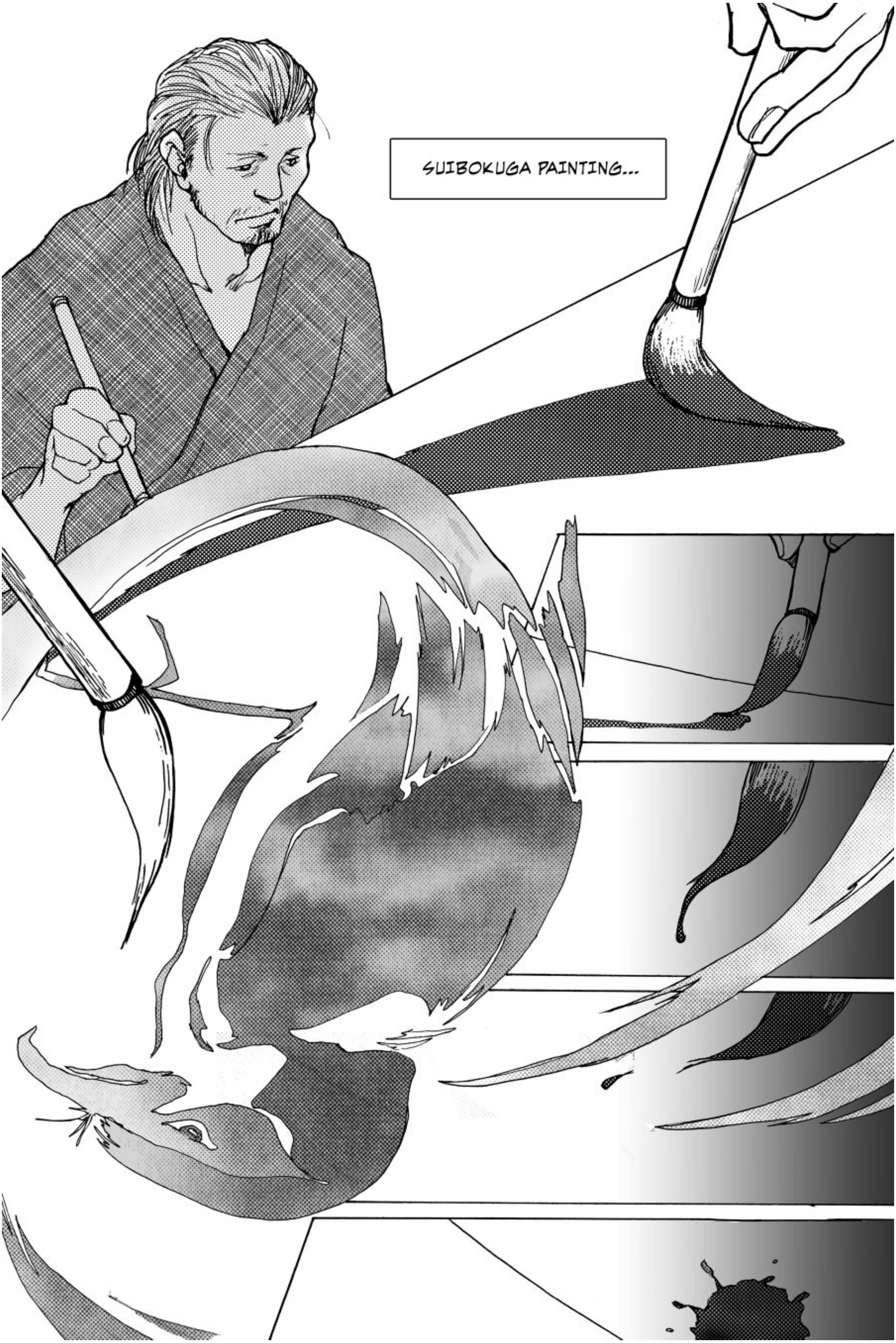

I HAD HEARD A GREAT DEAL ABOUT YOUR REPUTATION, MIYAMOTO-DONO.
BUT I HAD NEVER THOUGHT YOU WERE THIS STRONG!
FROM THAT TIME ON LORD TADATOSHI BEGAN PRACTICING MUSASHI'S TWO-SWORD STYLE*.

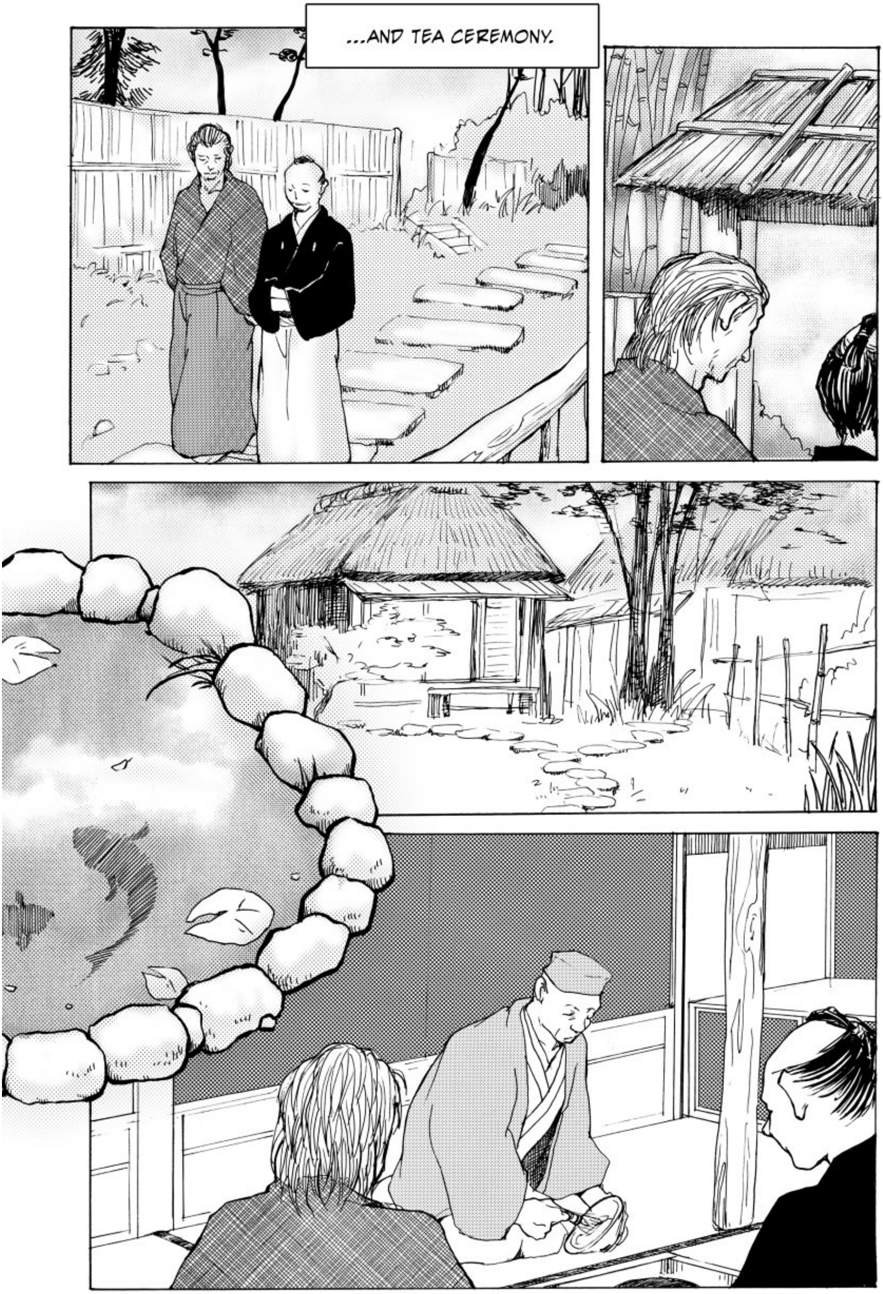
* "NITEN ICHI-RYU" IN JAPANESE.


BUT, AS I SAID, LORD TADATOSHI WAS A VERY CULTURED LORD. HE INVITED MUSASHI TO SIT IN WITH THE INNER CIRCLE TO DISCUSS MATTERS OF GOVERNMENT.
...BUT THE PLAN MAY AFFECT THE TAIMYOJI FAMILY TEMPLE AT MOUNT TATSUDA.
YES, INDEED.
HOSOKAWA-SAMA, I THINK WE FIRST NEED TO HEAR MORE FROM THE TRADERS ASSOCIATION REGARDING THEIR PLANS FOR THE KUROKAMI AREA.
WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS ON THIS ISSUE, MIYAMOTO-DONO?
HMM, YES...
PERHAPS WE SHOULD ASK THE TRADERS TO PRESENT THEIR PLANS TO US IN DETAIL.

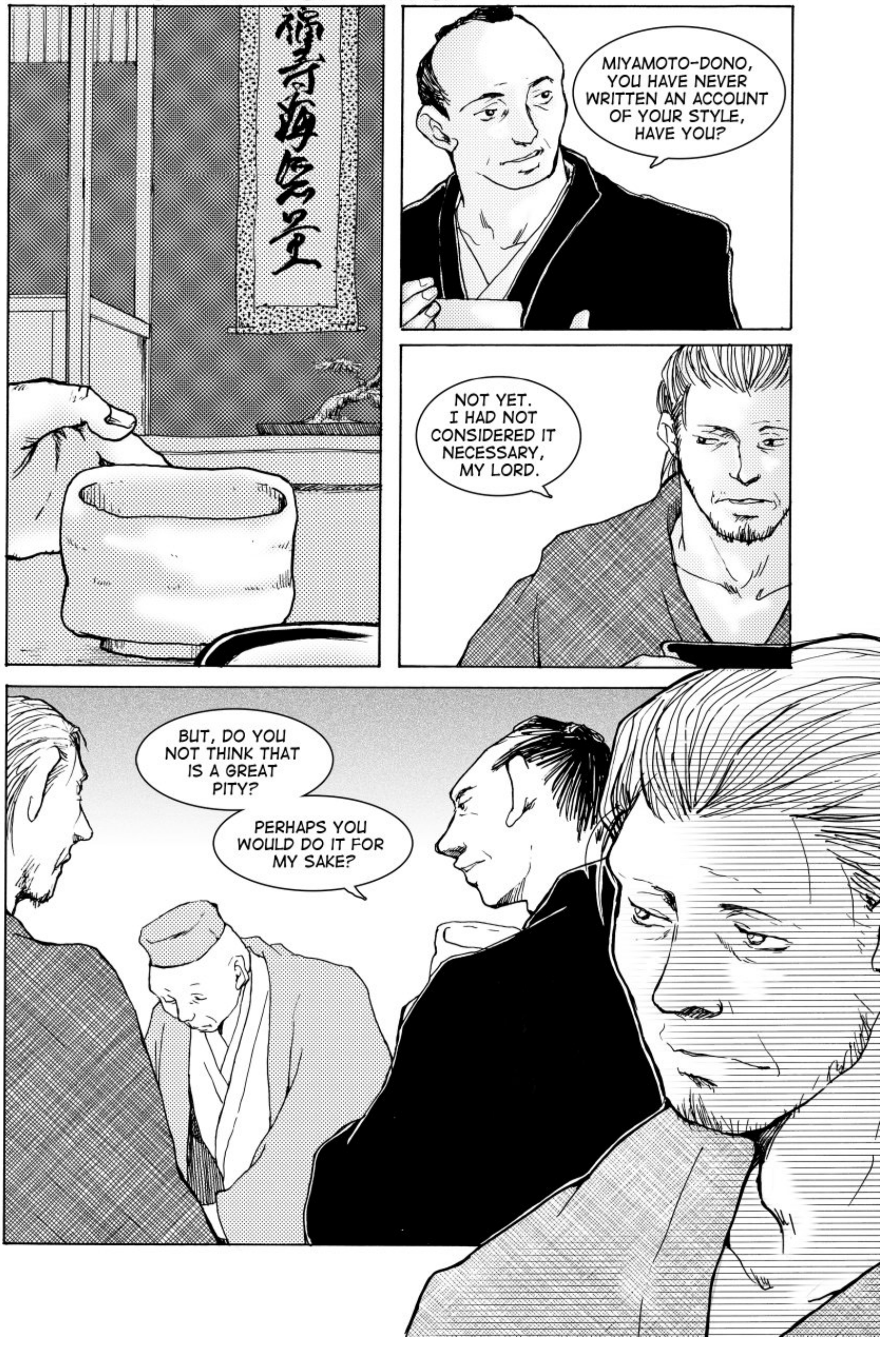

MUSASHI HIMSELF WAS UNUSUAL FOR A WARRIOR OF THE TIME IN BEING ABLE TO READ AND WRITE. LORD TADATOSHI SEEMED TO VALUE HIS COMPANY, AND THEY ENGAGED IN MANY ACTIVITIES TOGETHER, SUCH AS SHODO CALLIGRAPHY...

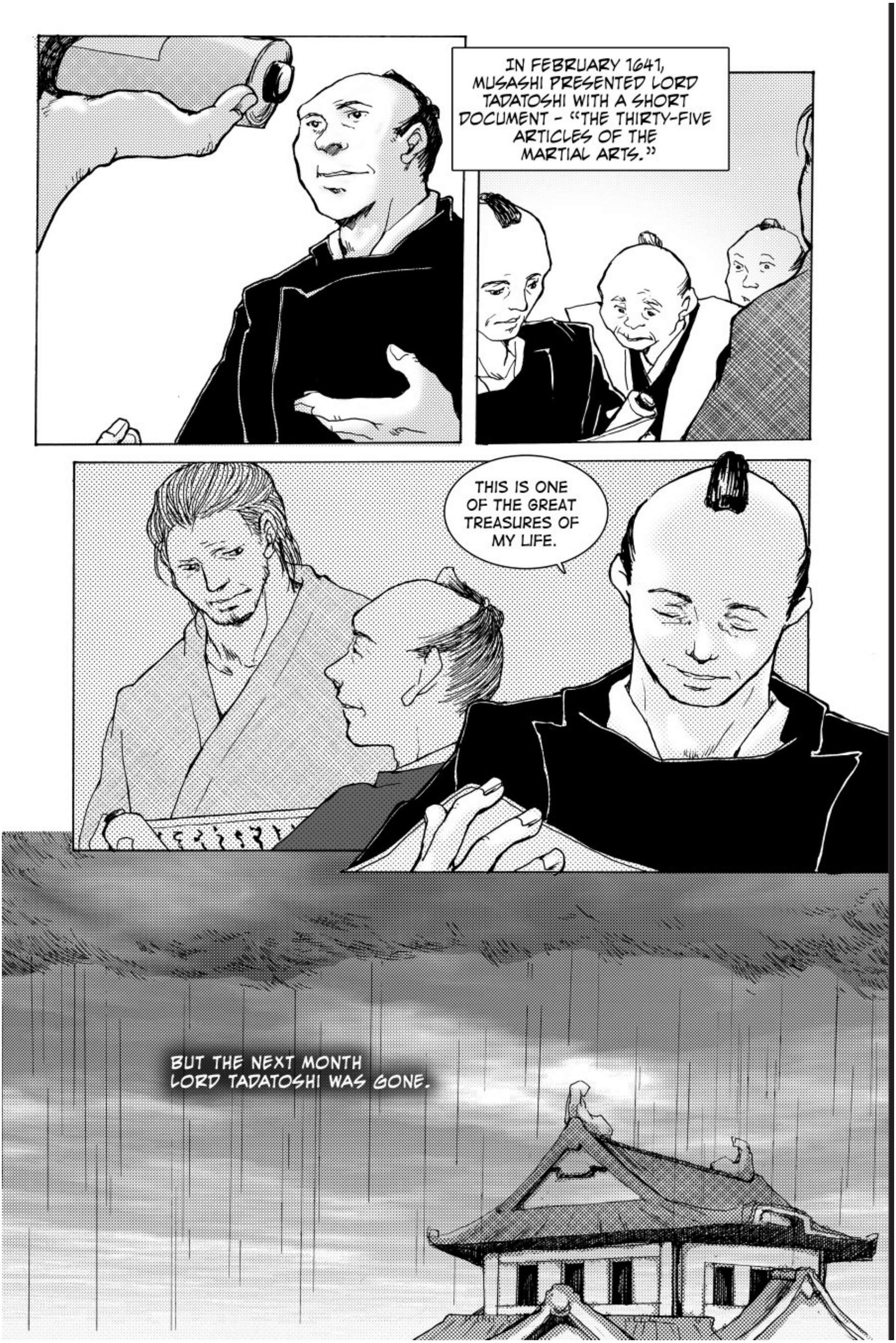

NOH THEATRE...

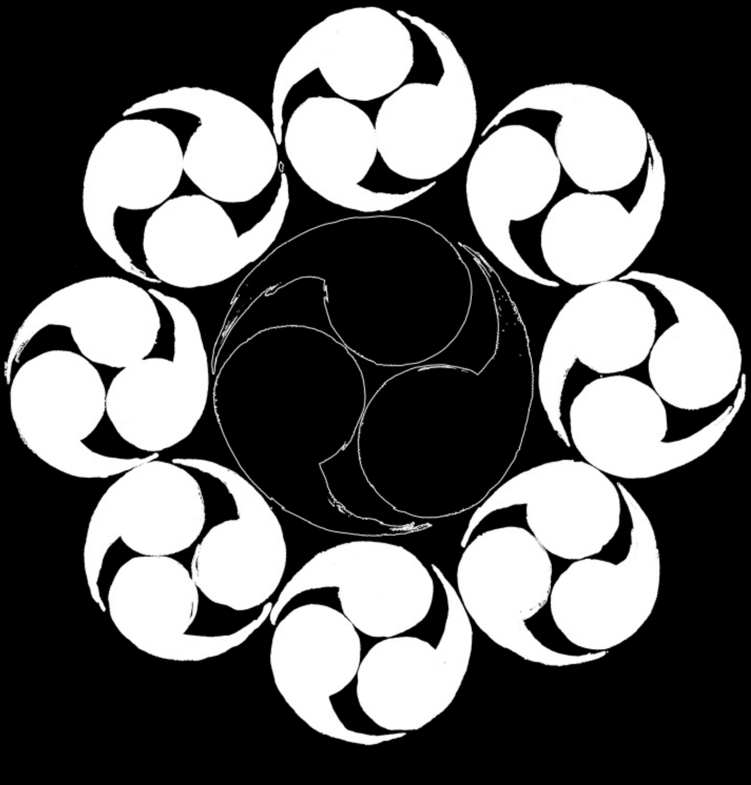

SUIBOKUGA PAINTING...

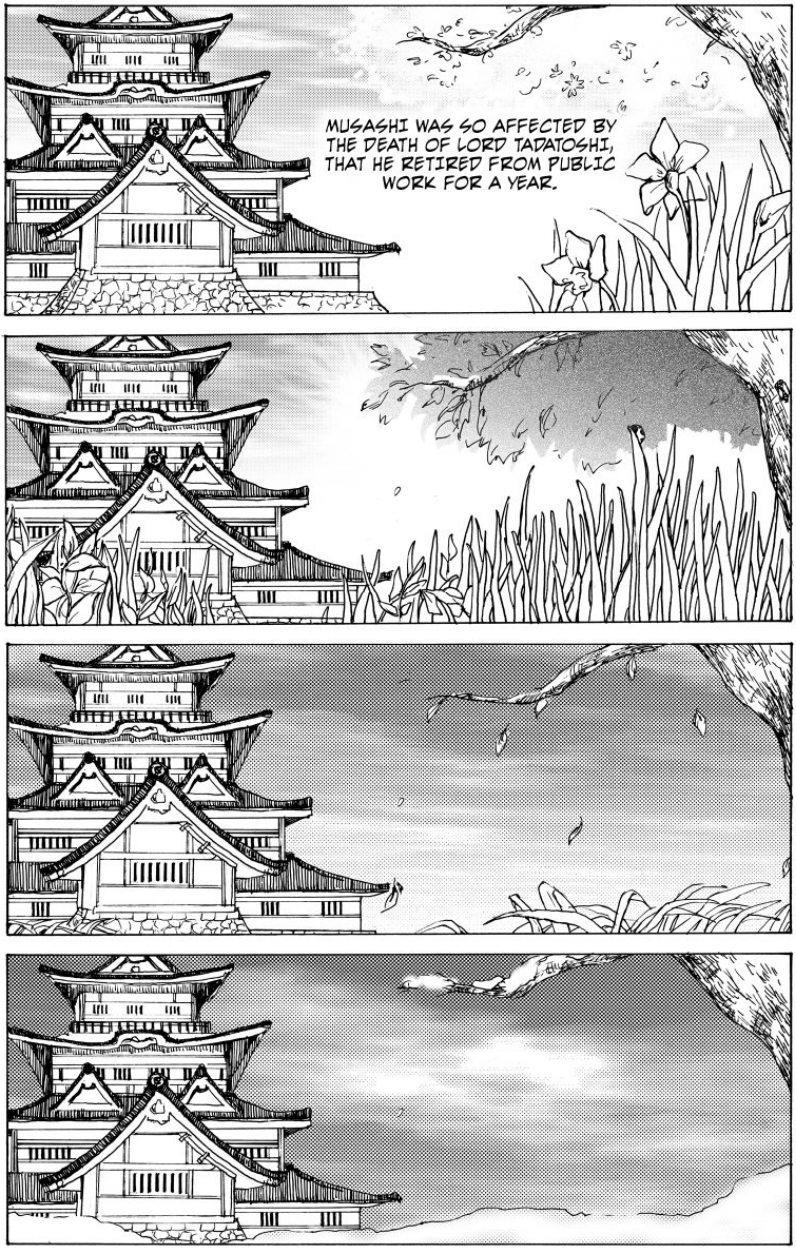

...AND TEA CEREMONY.

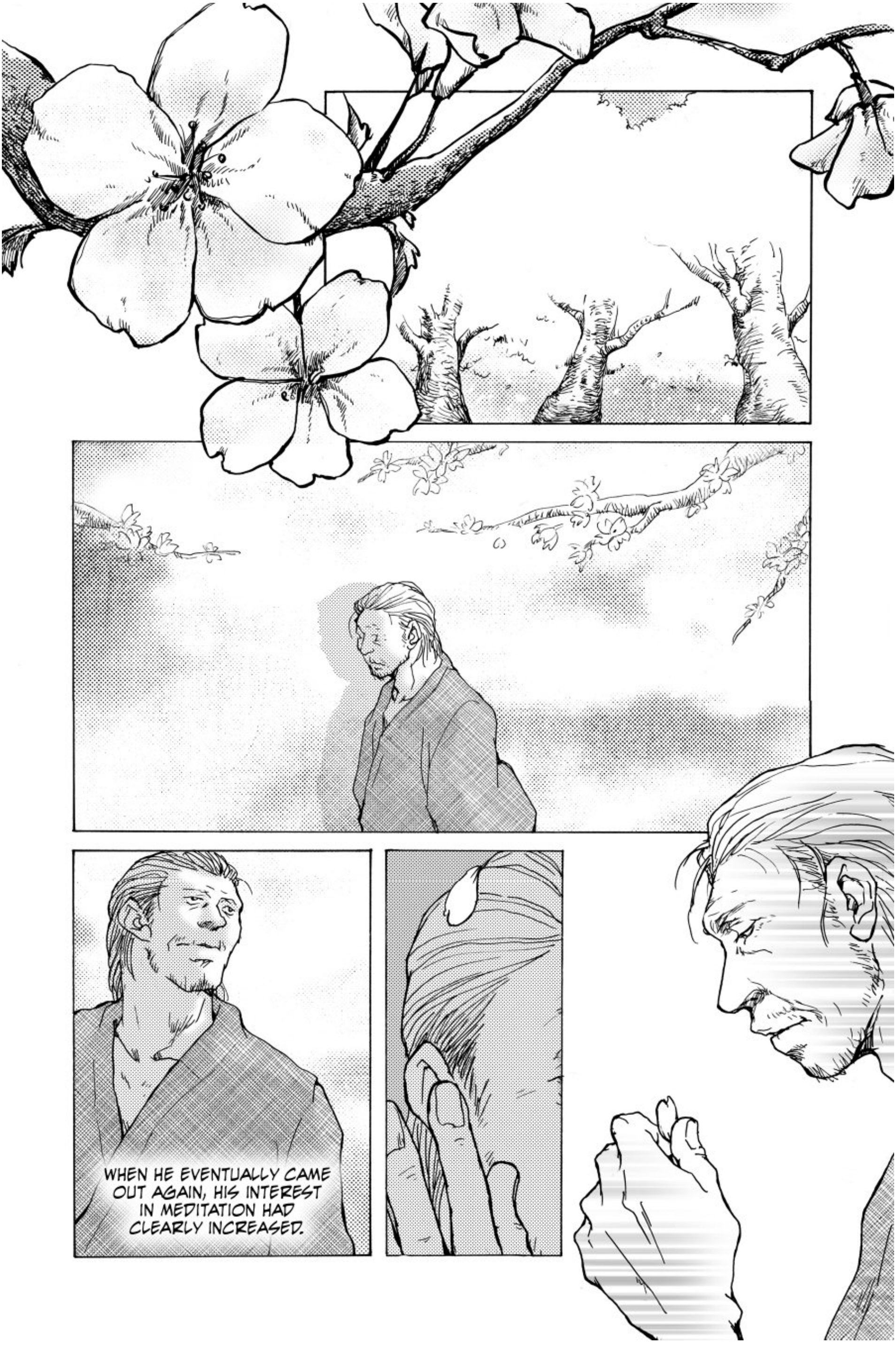
* SCROLL CALLIGRAPHY: "AN UNENDING SEA OF BLESSINGS."

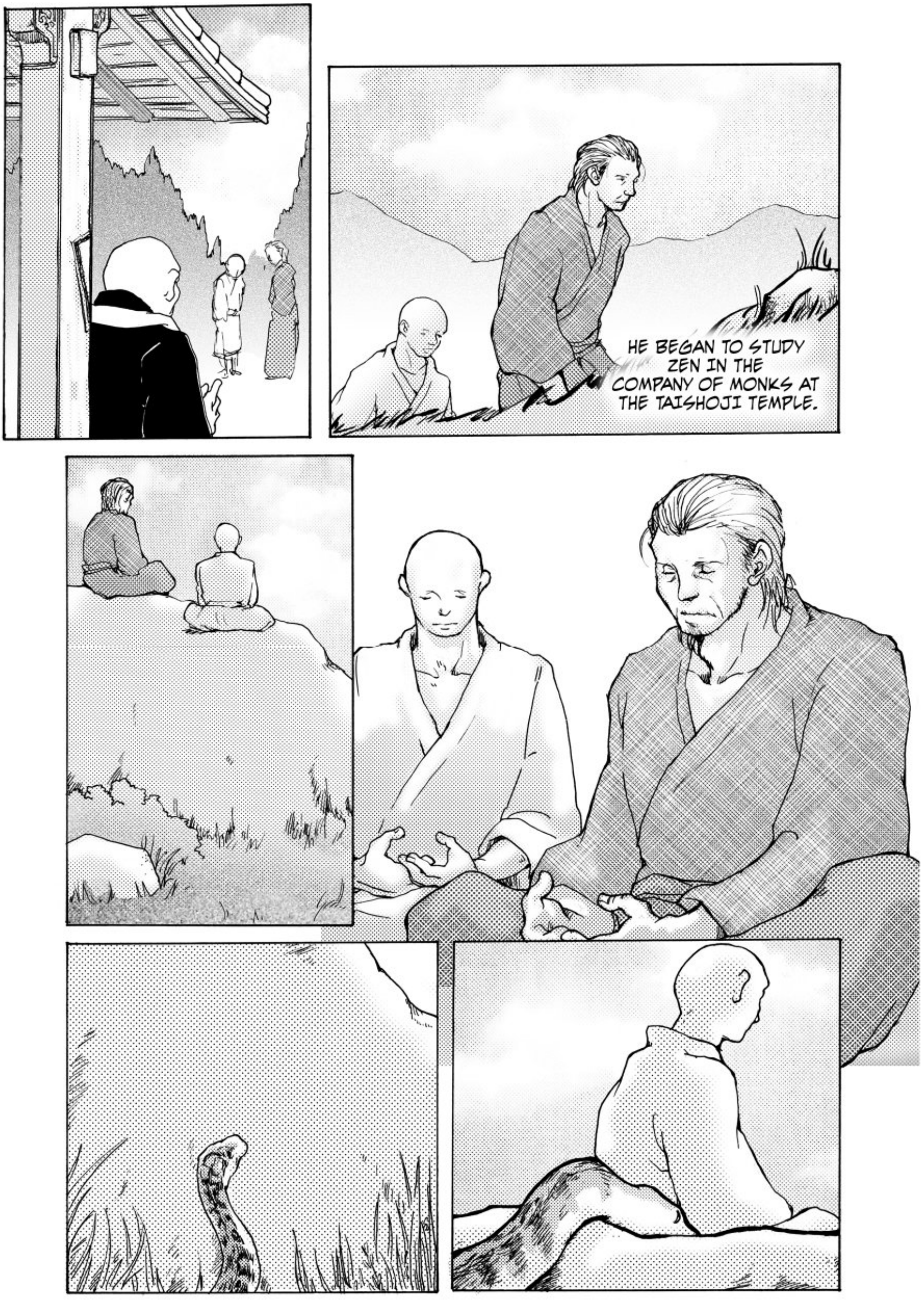

福寿海無量
MIYAMOTO-DONO, YOU HAVE NEVER WRITTEN AN ACCOUNT OF YOUR STYLE, HAVE YOU?
NOT YET. I HAD NOT CONSIDERED IT NECESSARY, MY LORD.
BUT, DO YOU NOT THINK THAT IS A GREAT PITY?
PERHAPS YOU WOULD DO IT FOR MY SAKE?

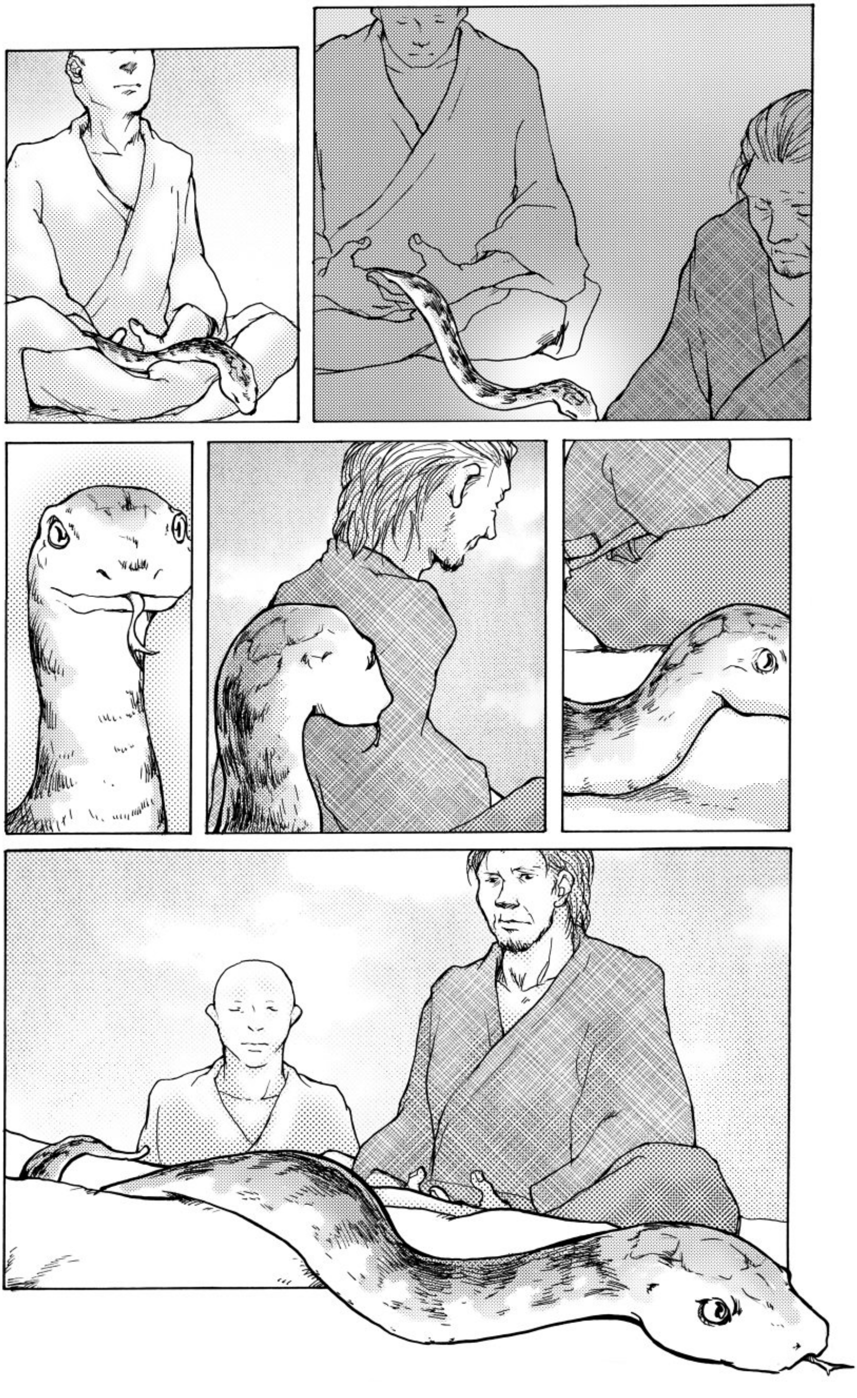

IN FEBRUARY 1641, MUSASHI PRESENTED LORD TADATOSHI WITH A SHORT DOCUMENT - "THE THIRTY-FIVE ARTICLES OF THE MARTIAL ARTS."
THIS IS ONE OF THE GREAT TREASURES OF MY LIFE.
BUT THE NEXT MONTH LORD TADATOSHI WAS GONE.

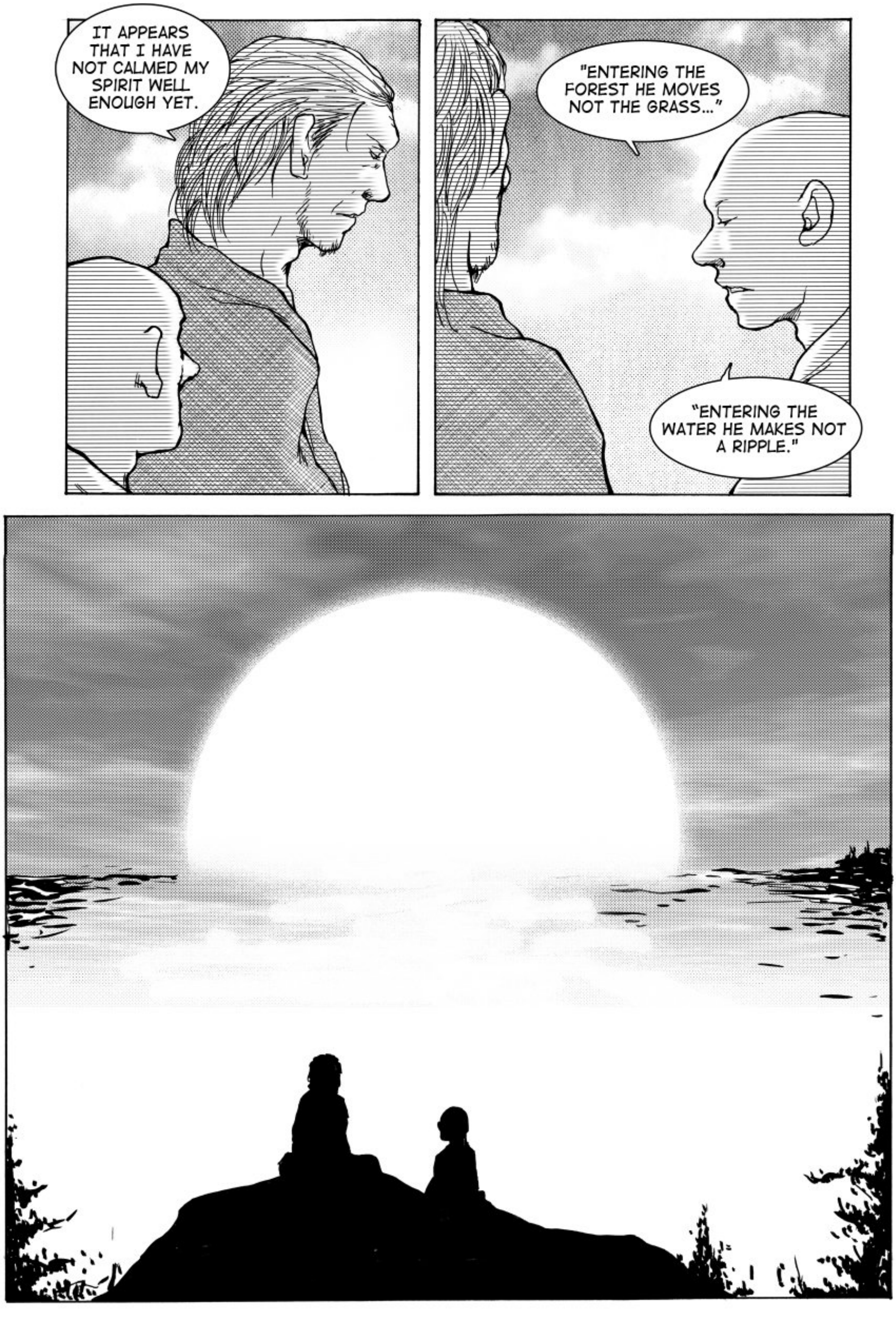


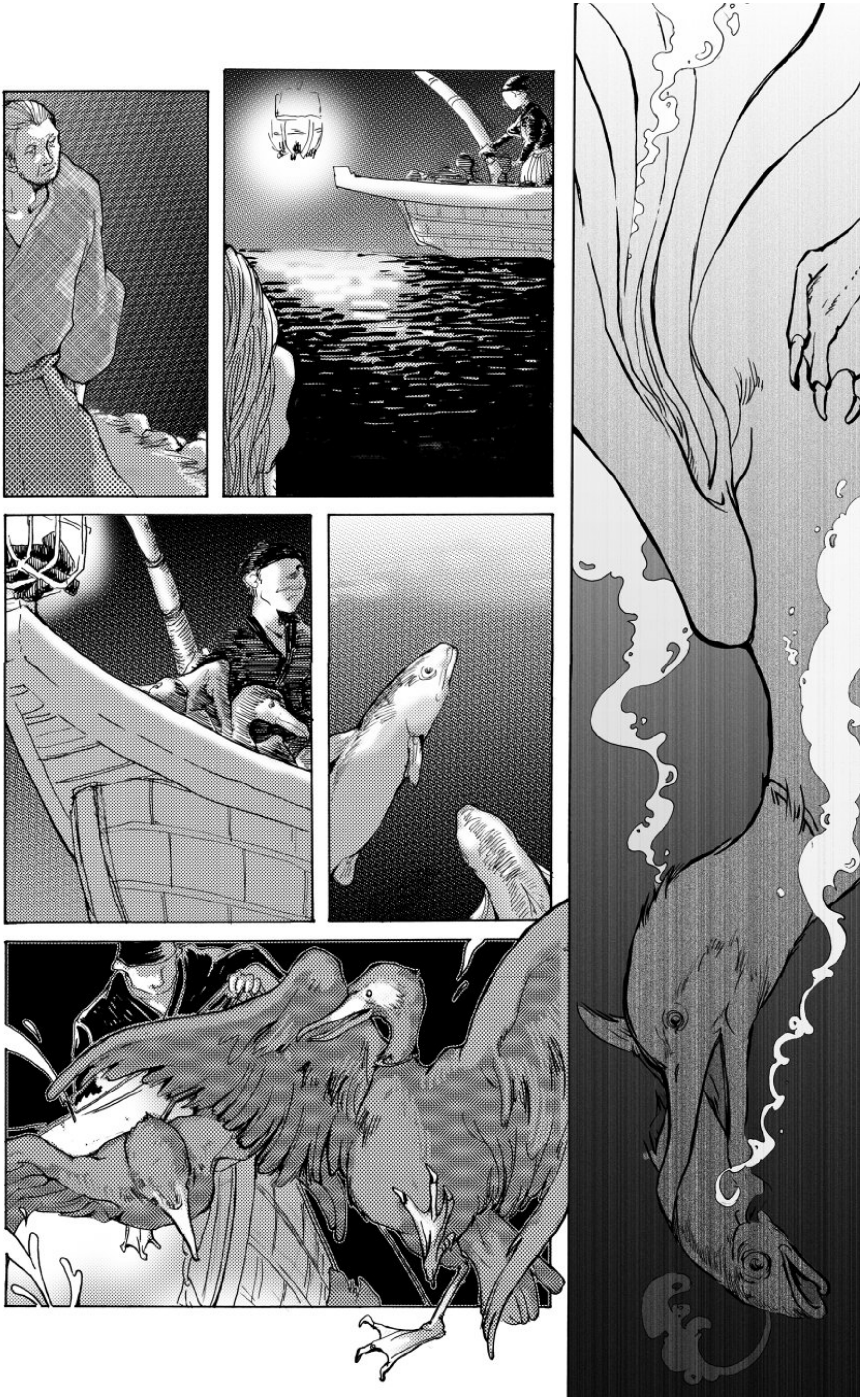

MUSASHI WAS SO AFFECTED BY THE DEATH OF LORD TADATOSHI, THAT HE RETIRED FROM PUBLIC WORK FOR A YEAR.

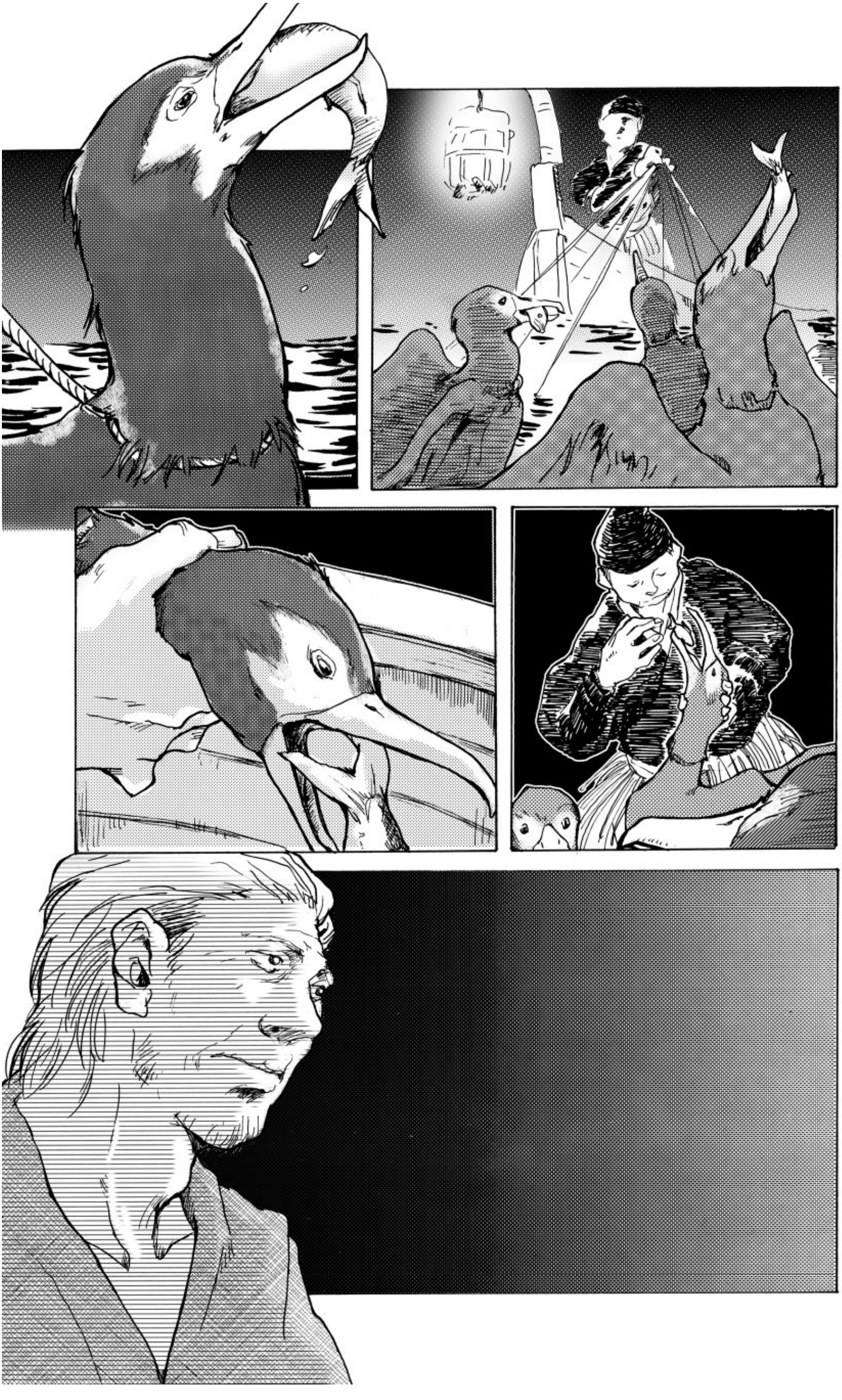

WHEN HE EVENTUALLY CAME OUT AGAIN, HIS INTEREST IN MEDITATION HAD CLEARLY INCREASED.

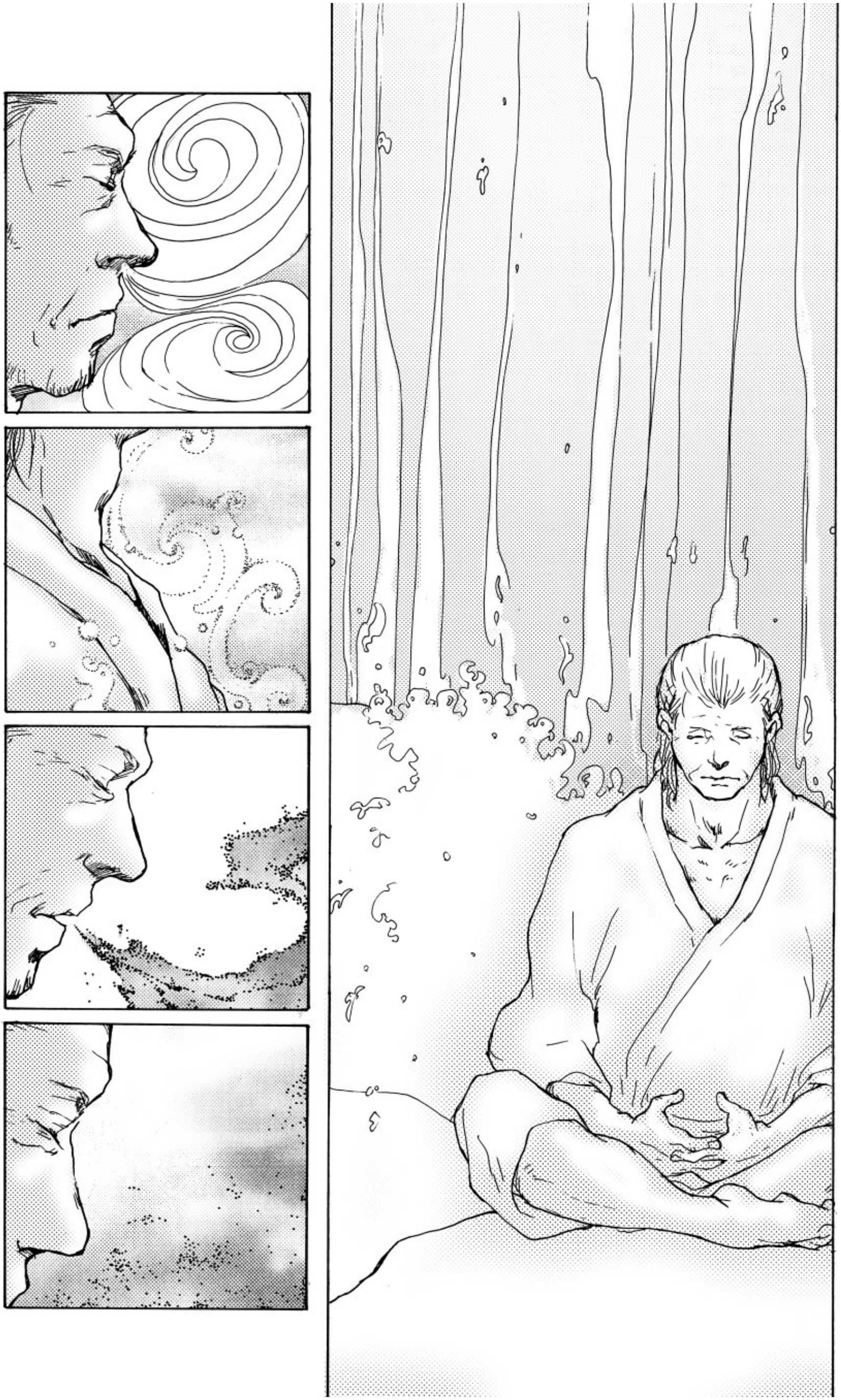

HE BEGAN TO STUDY ZEN IN THE COMPANY OF MONKS AT THE TAISHOJI TEMPLE.

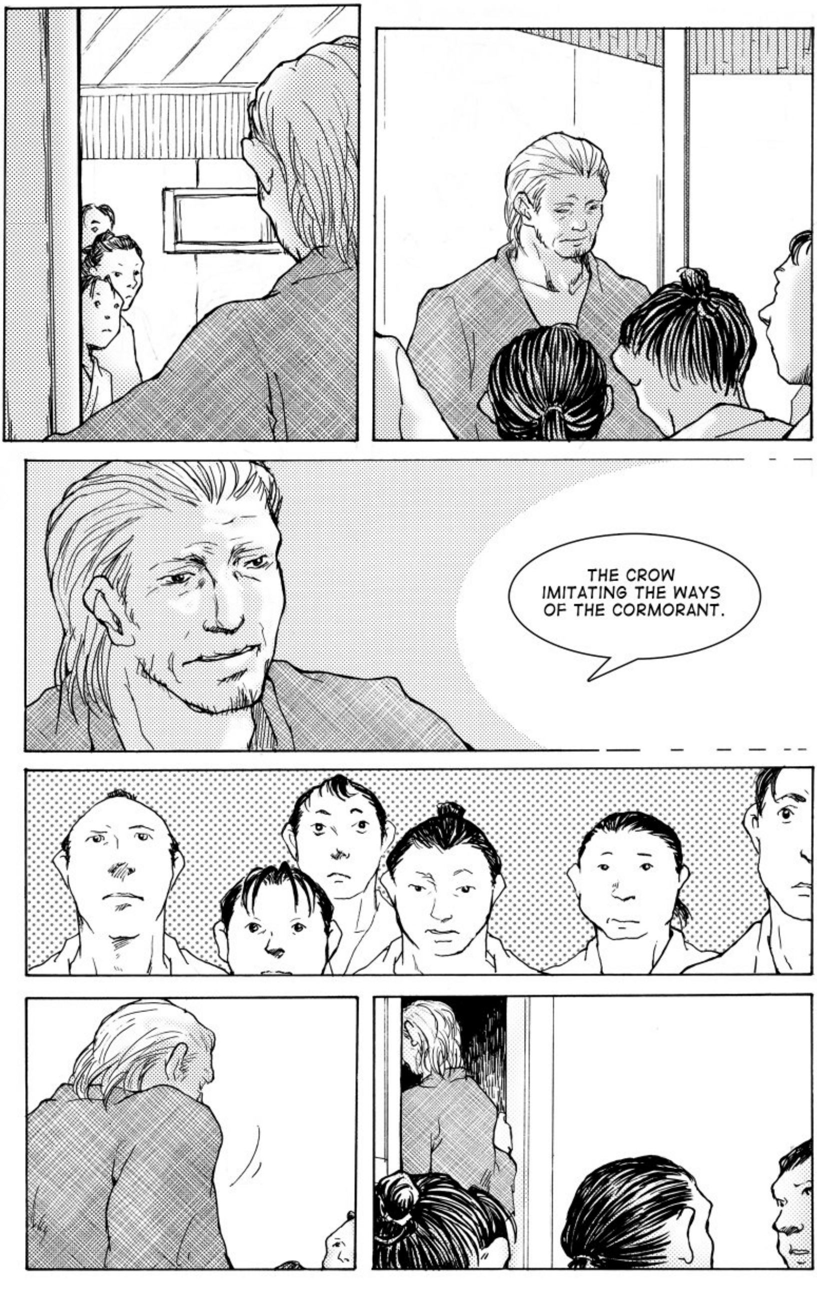


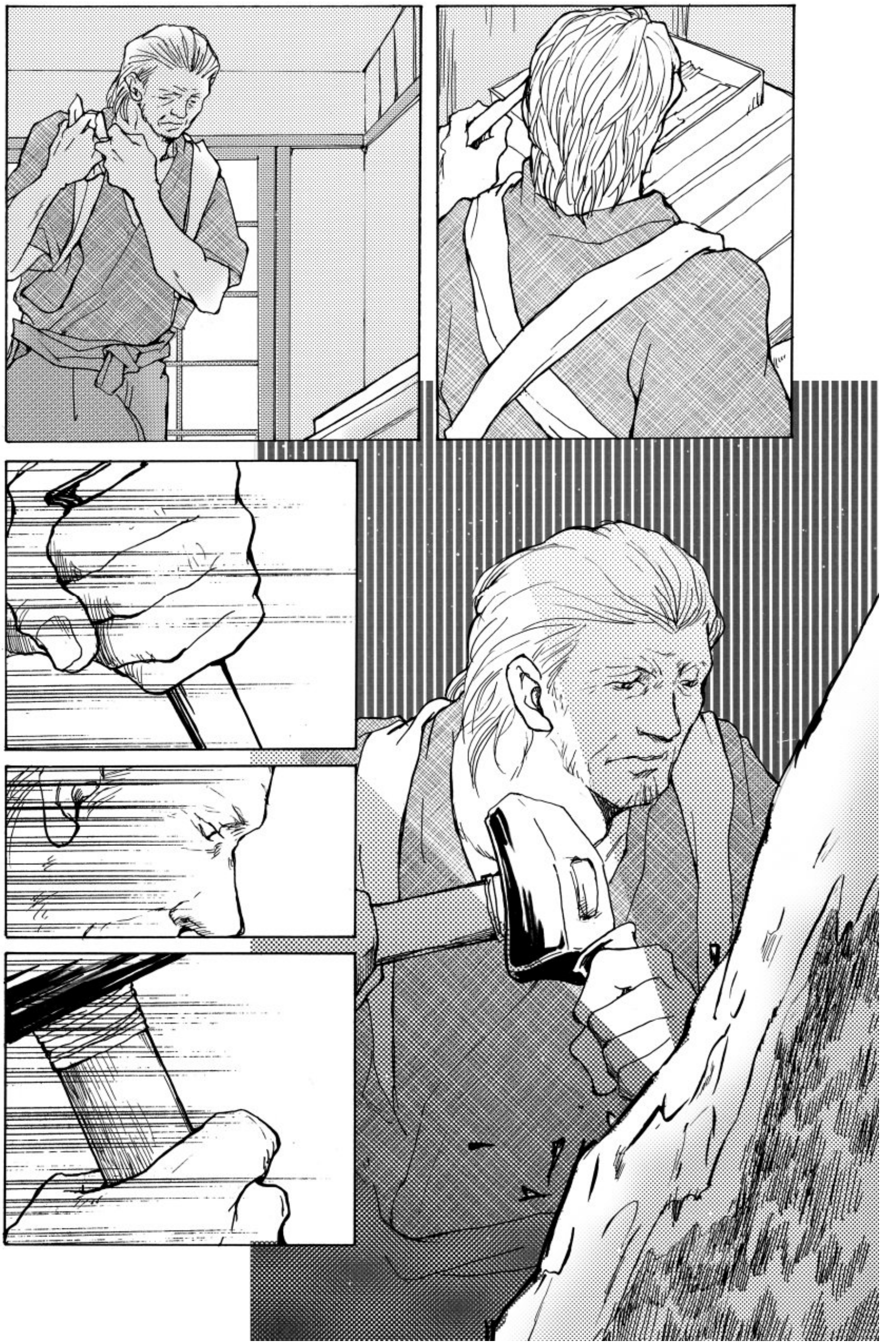

IT APPEARS THAT I HAVE NOT CALMED MY SPIRIT WELL ENOUGH YET.
"ENTERING THE FOREST HE MOVES NOT THE GRASS..."
"ENTERING THE WATER HE MAKES NOT A RIPPLE."

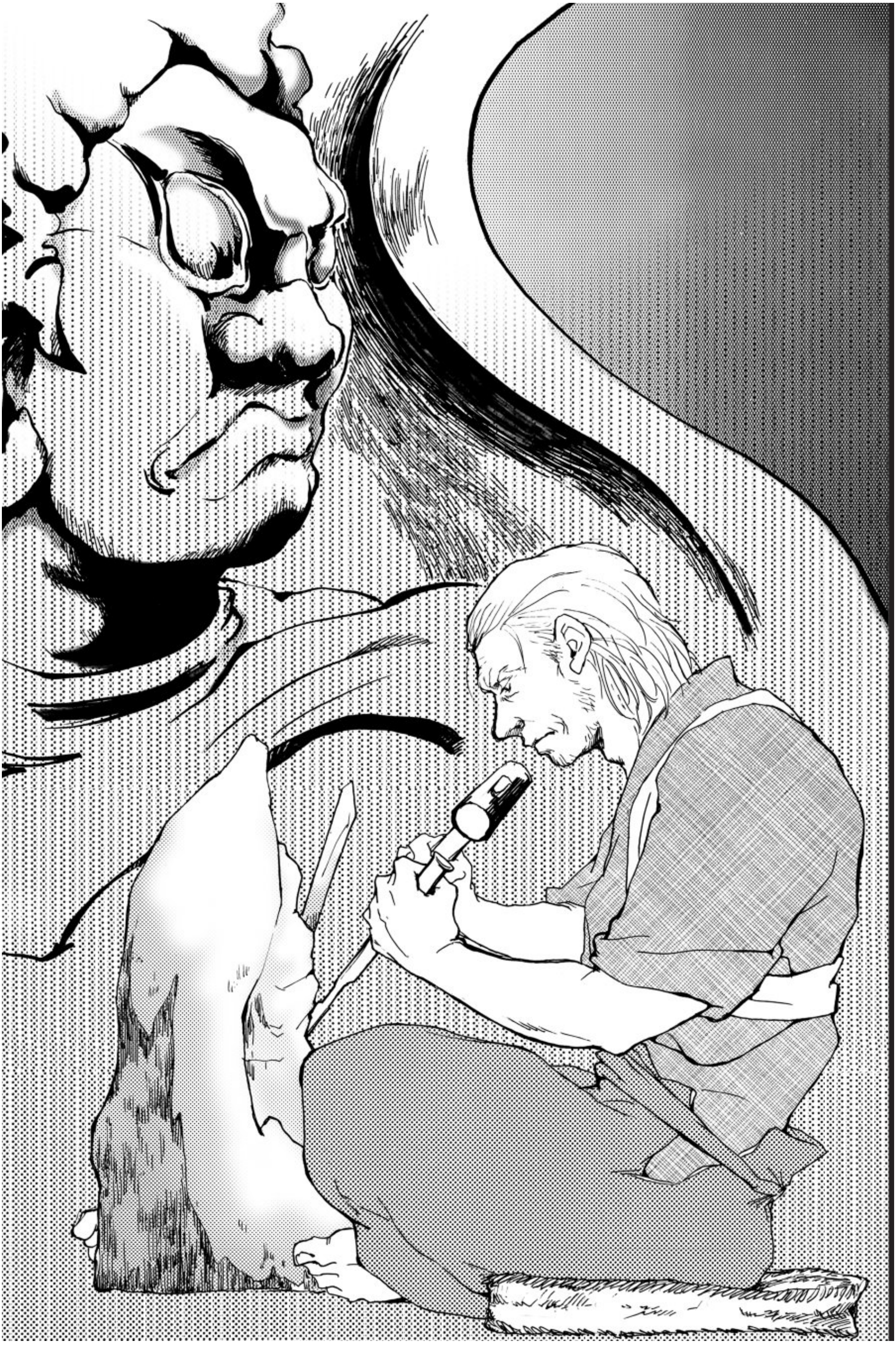


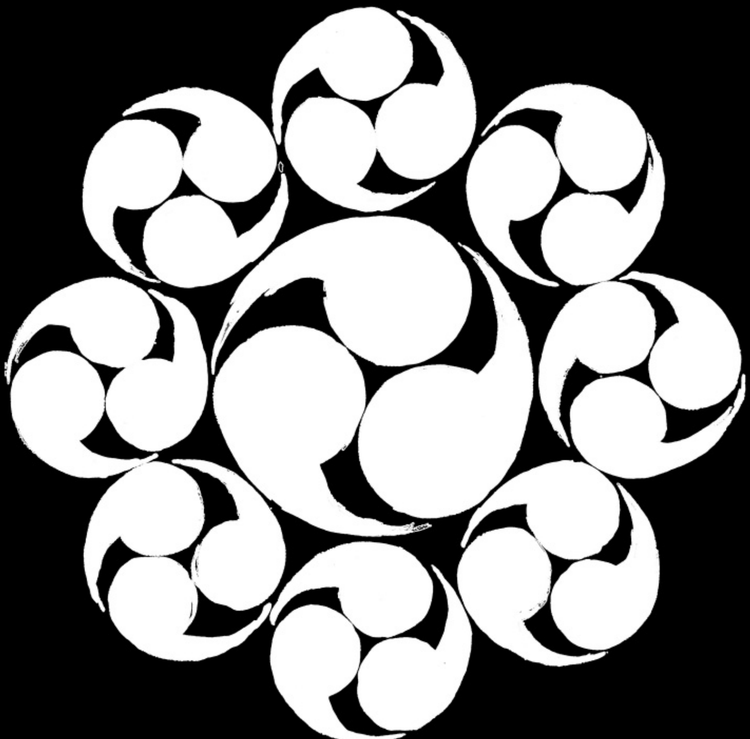


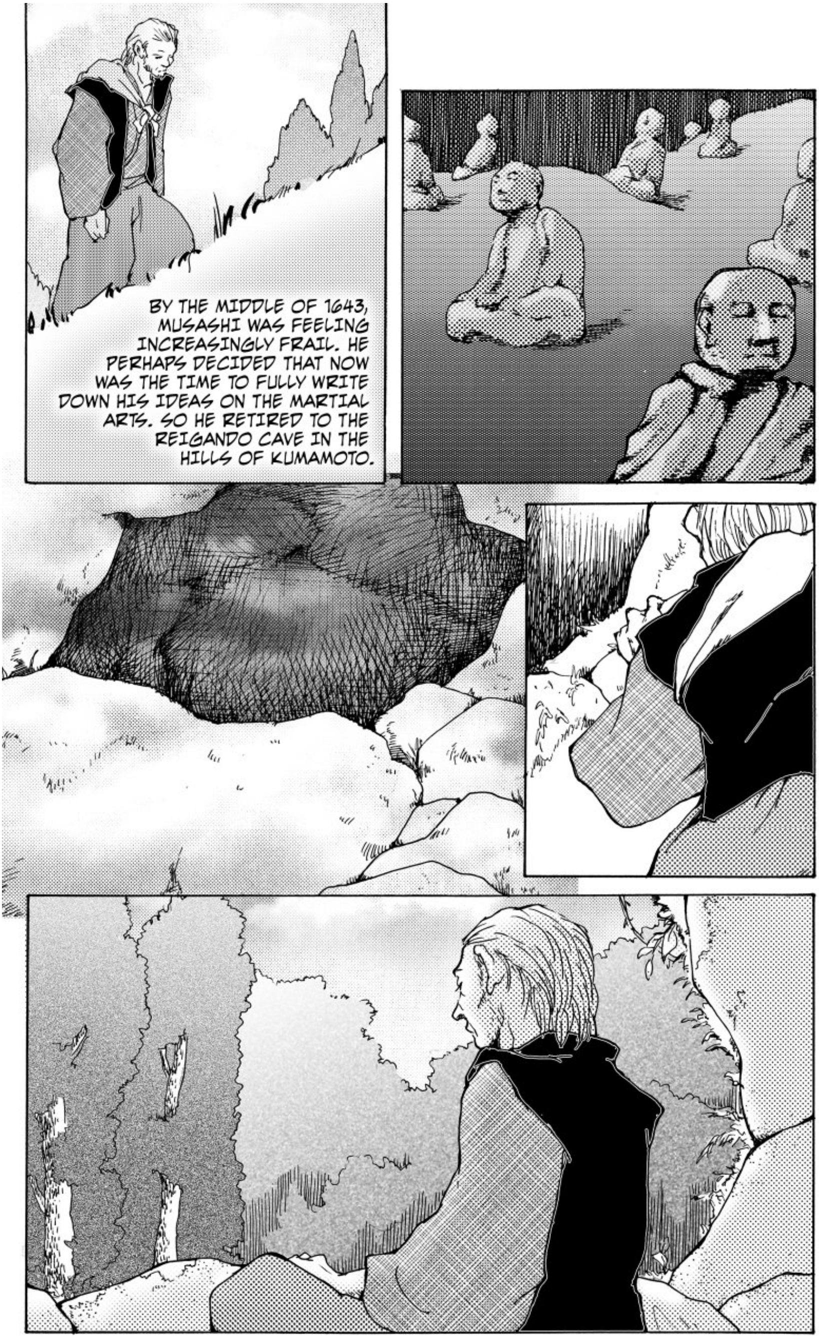


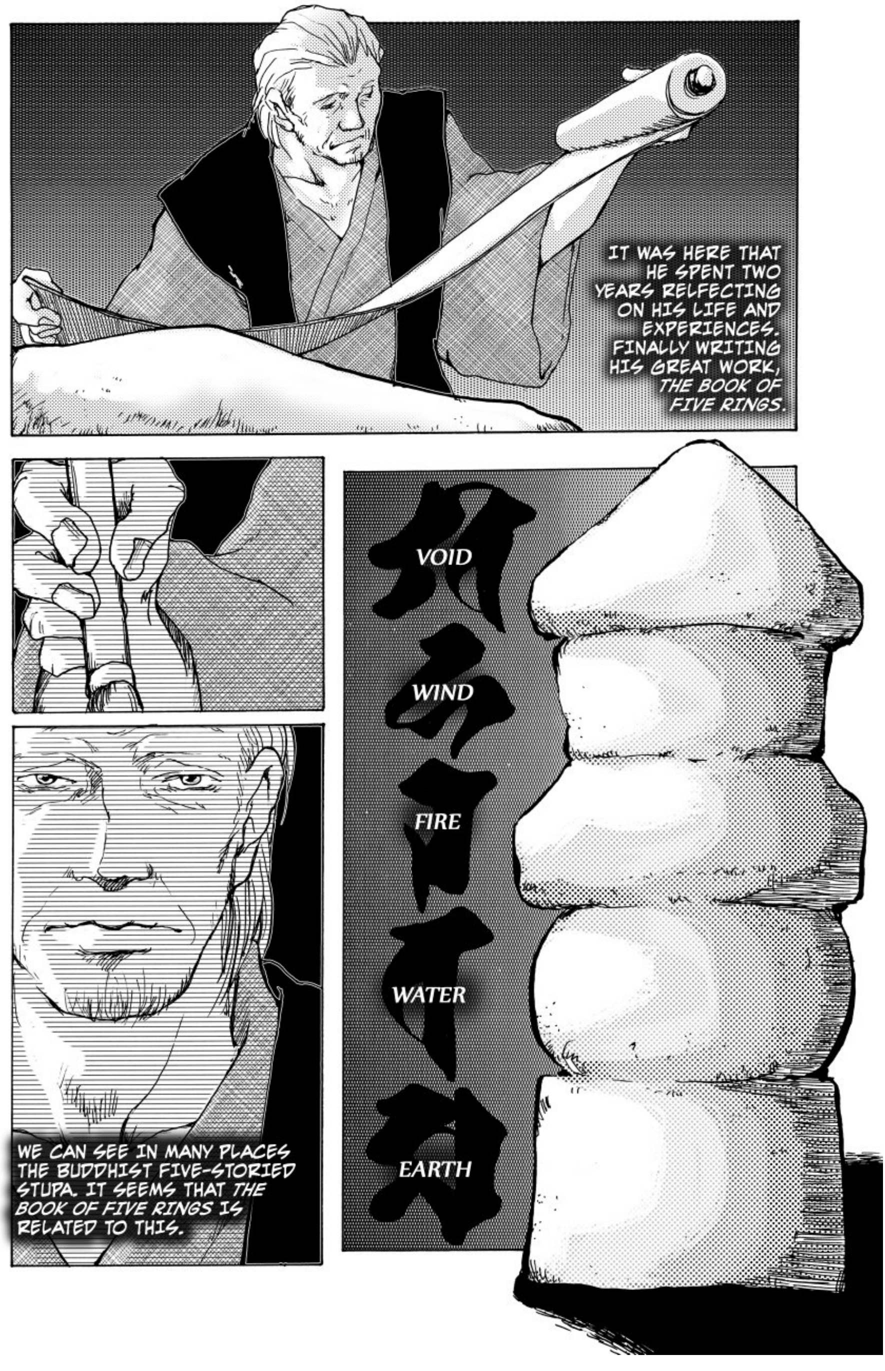

THE CROW IMITATING THE WAYS OF THE CORMORANT.

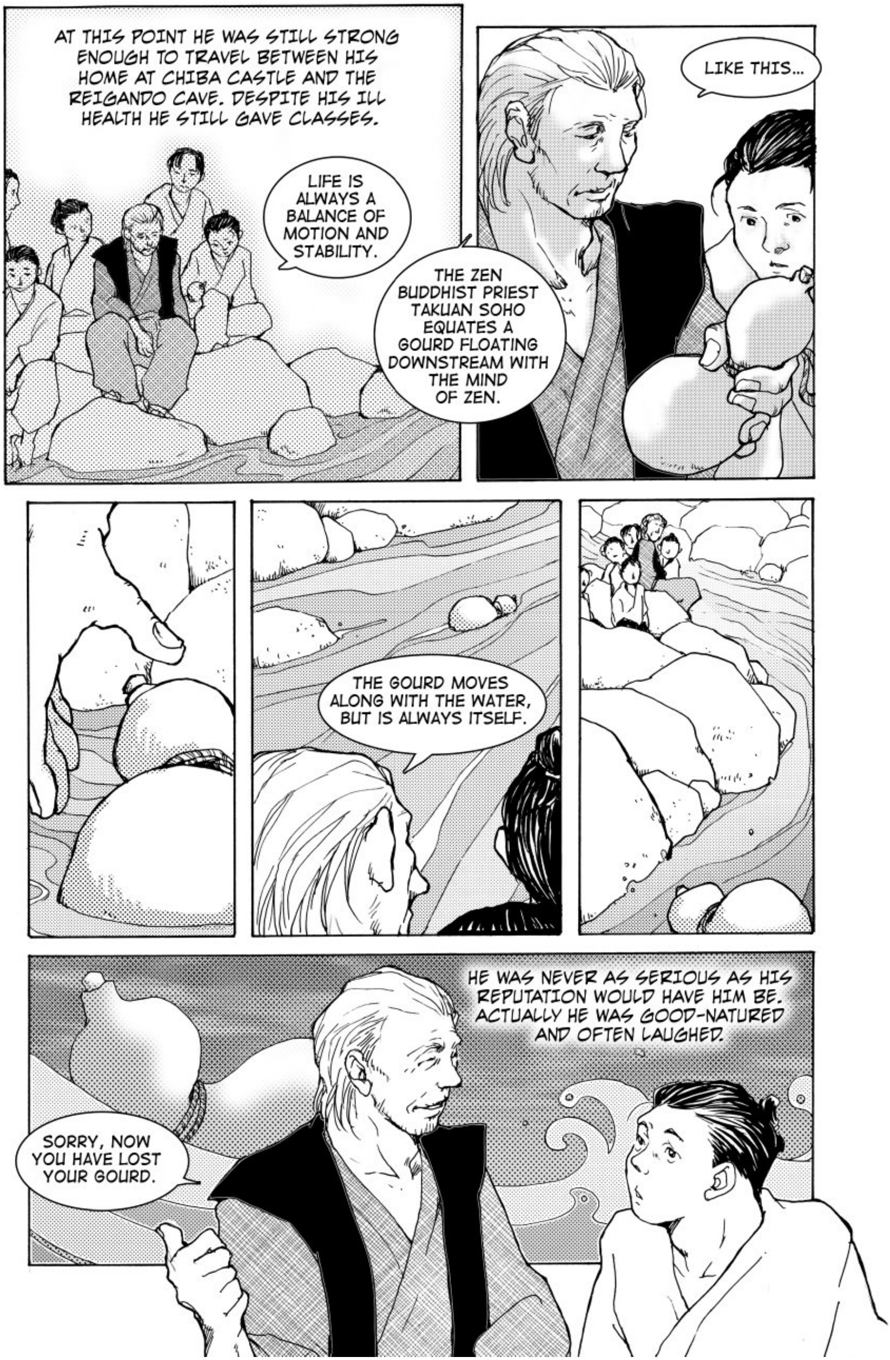


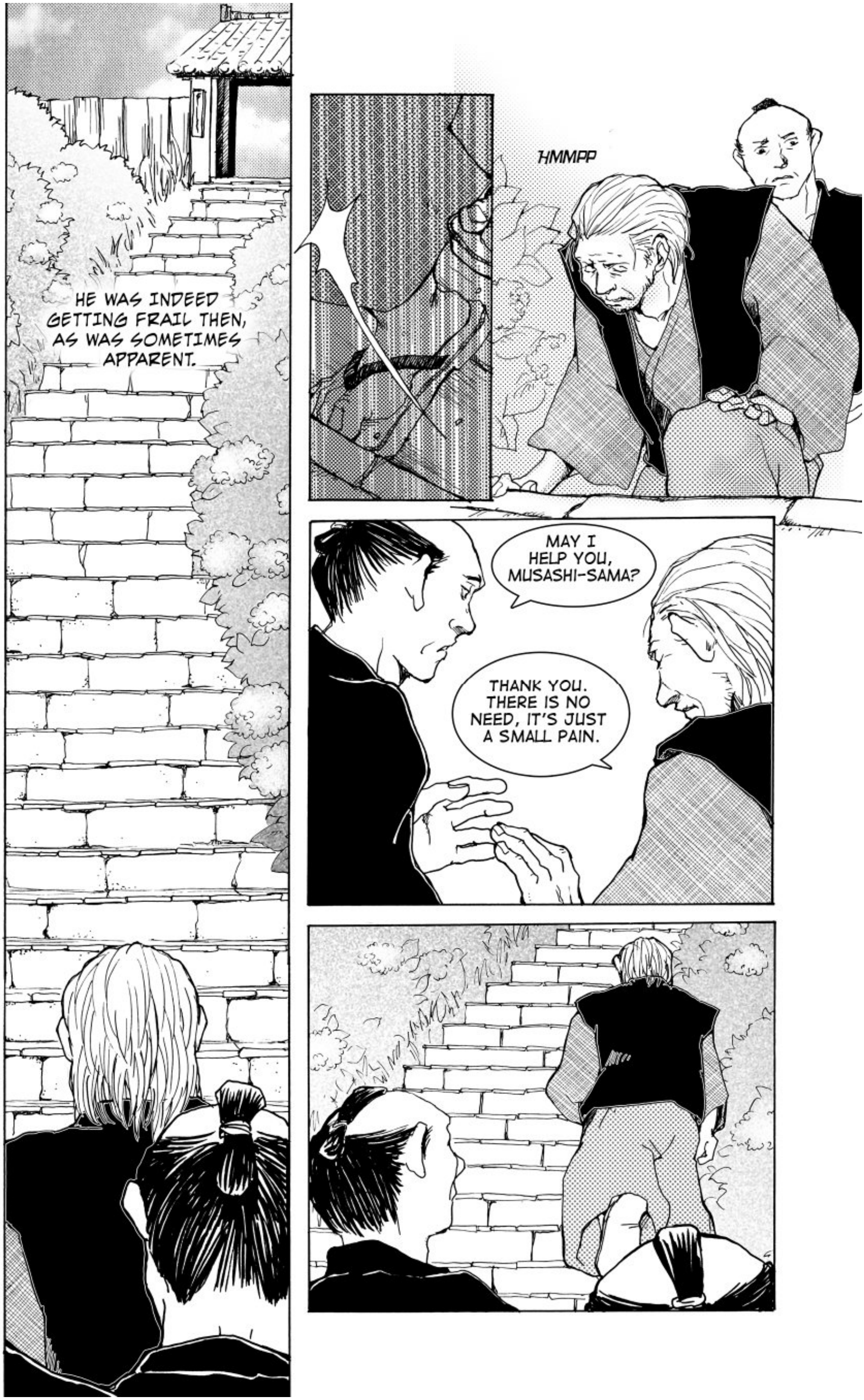


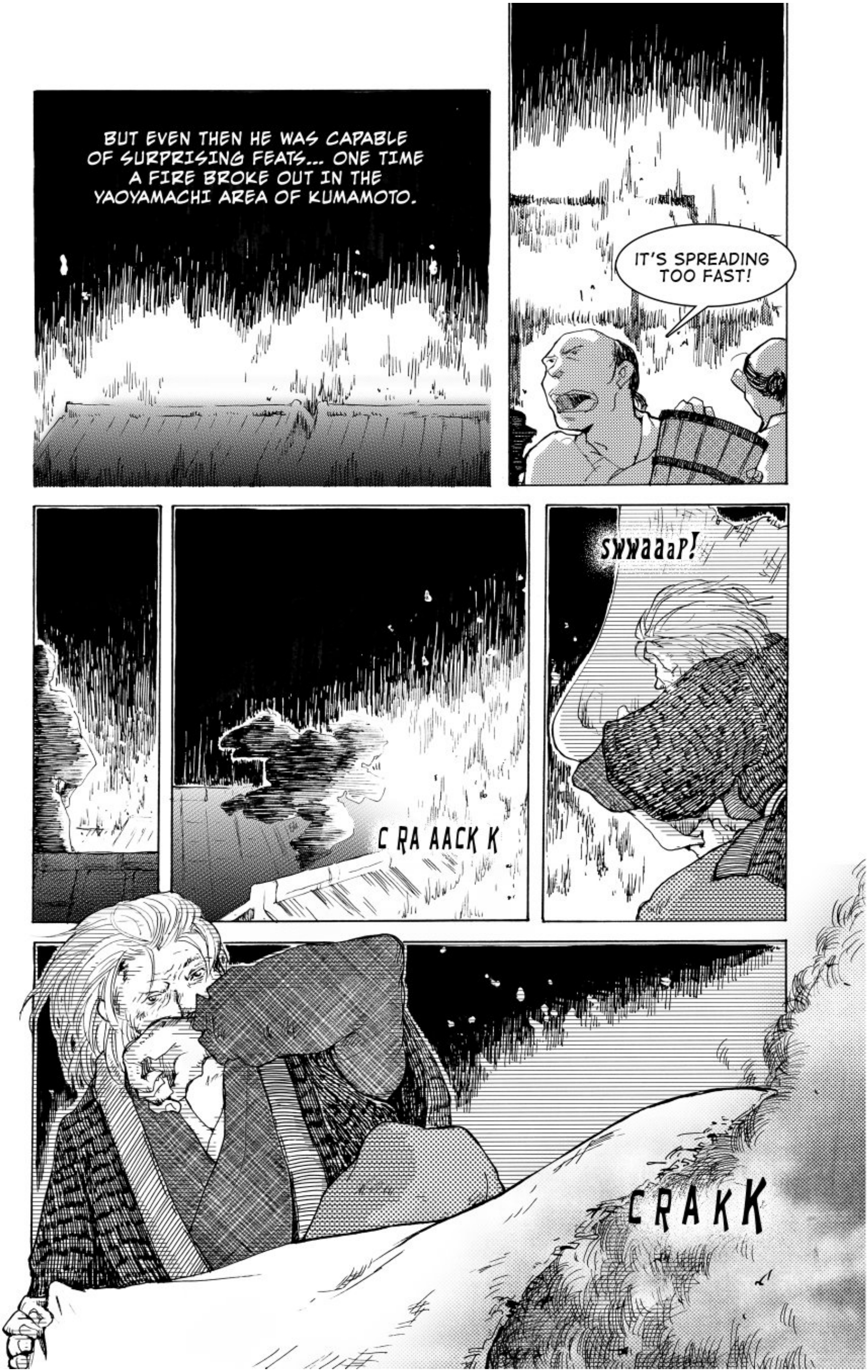


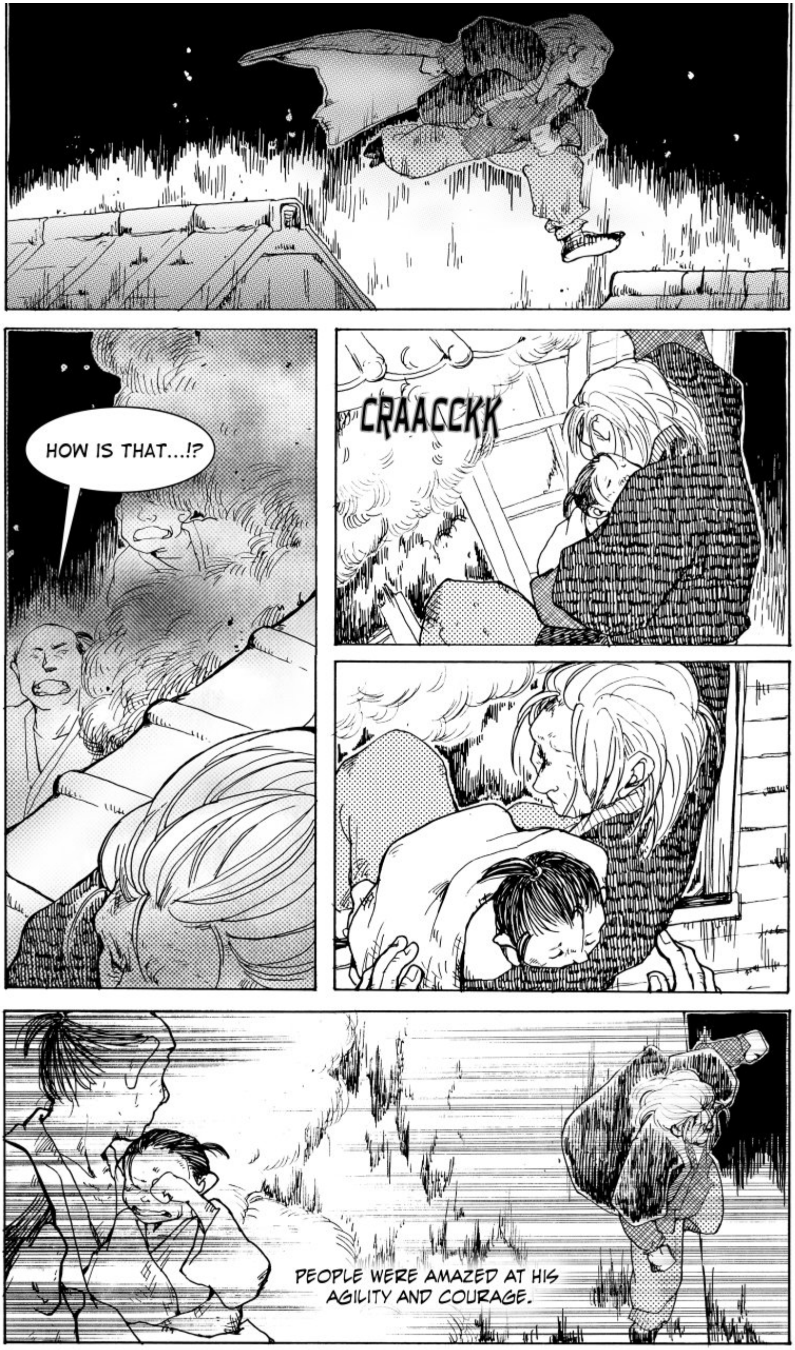

BY THE MIDDLE OF 1643, MUSASHI WAS FEELING INCREASINGLY FRAIL. HE PERHAPS DECIDED THAT NOW WAS THE TIME TO FULLY WRITE DOWN HIS IDEAS ON THE MARTIAL ARTS. SO HE RETIRED TO THE REIGANDO CAVE IN THE HILLS OF KUMAMOTO.

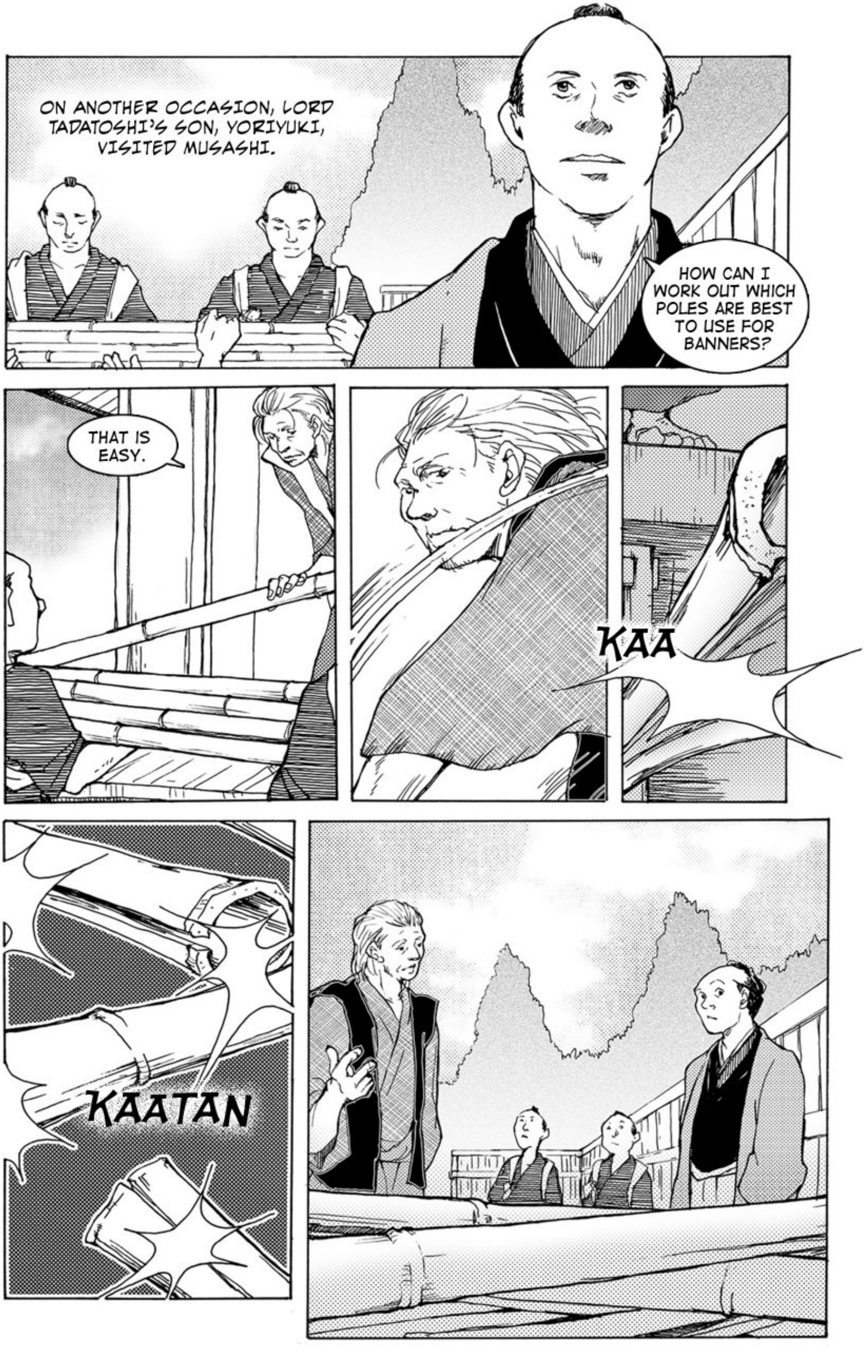

IT WAS HERE THAT HE SPENT TWO YEARS RELFECTING ON HIS LIFE AND EXPERIENCES. FINALLY WRITING HIS GREAT WORK, *THE BOOK OF FIVE RINGS*.
WE CAN SEE IN MANY PLACES THE BUDDHIST FIVE-STORIED STUPA. IT SEEMS THAT *THE BOOK OF FIVE RINGS* IS RELATED TO THIS.
VOID
WIND
FIRE
WATER
EARTH

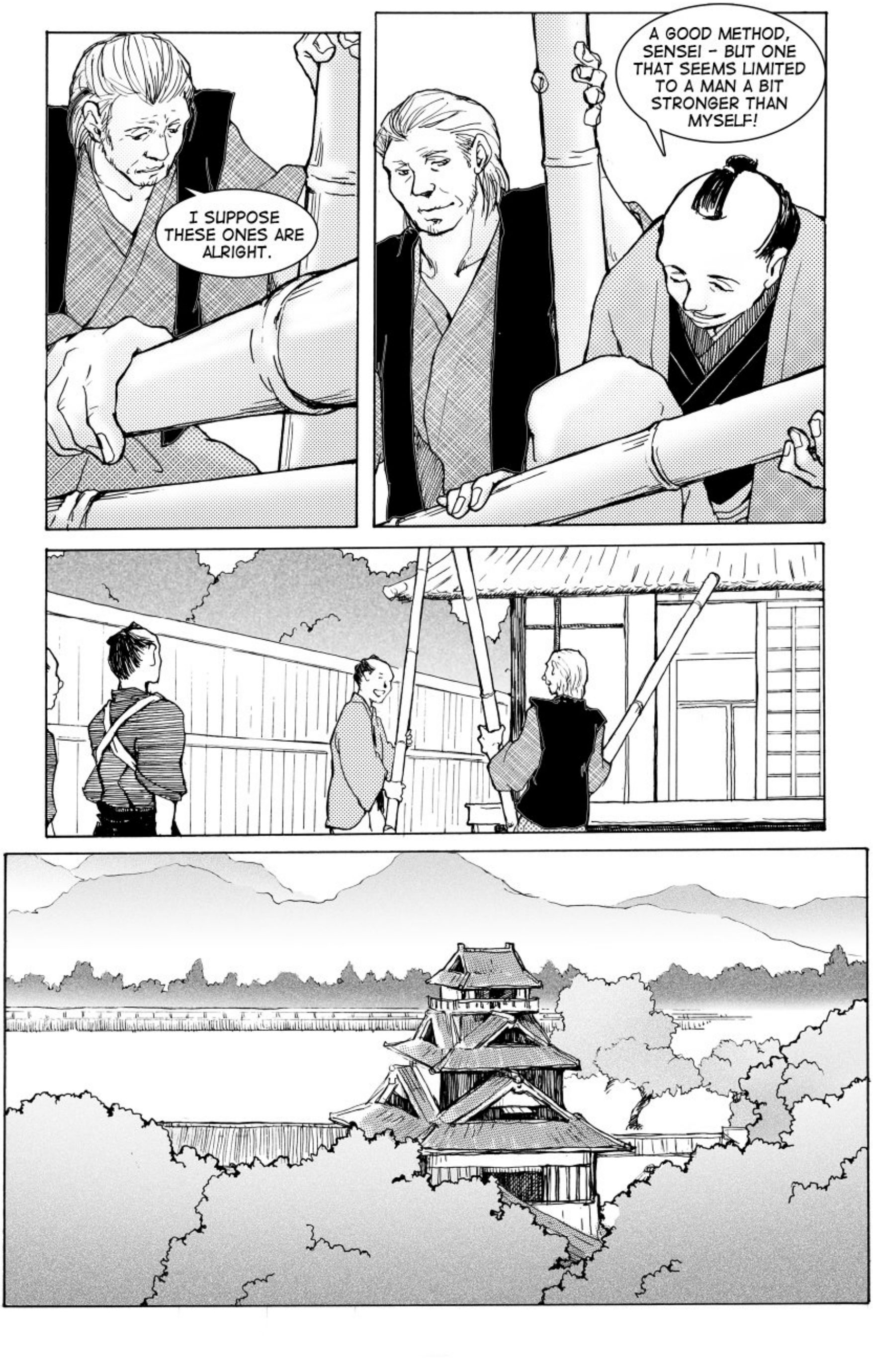

AT THIS POINT HE WAS STILL STRONG ENOUGH TO TRAVEL BETWEEN HIS HOME AT CHIBA CASTLE AND THE REIGANDO CAVE. DESPITE HIS ILL HEALTH HE STILL GAVE CLASSES.
LIFE IS ALWAYS A BALANCE OF MOTION AND STABILITY.
LIKE THIS...
THE ZEN BUDDHIST PRIEST TAKUAN SOHO EQUATES A GOURD FLOATING DOWNSTREAM WITH THE MIND OF ZEN.
THE GOURD MOVES ALONG WITH THE WATER, BUT IS ALWAYS ITSELF.
HE WAS NEVER AS SERIOUS AS HIS REPUTATION WOULD HAVE HIM BE. ACTUALLY HE WAS GOOD-NATURED AND OFTEN LAUGHED.
SORRY, NOW YOU HAVE LOST YOUR GOURD.

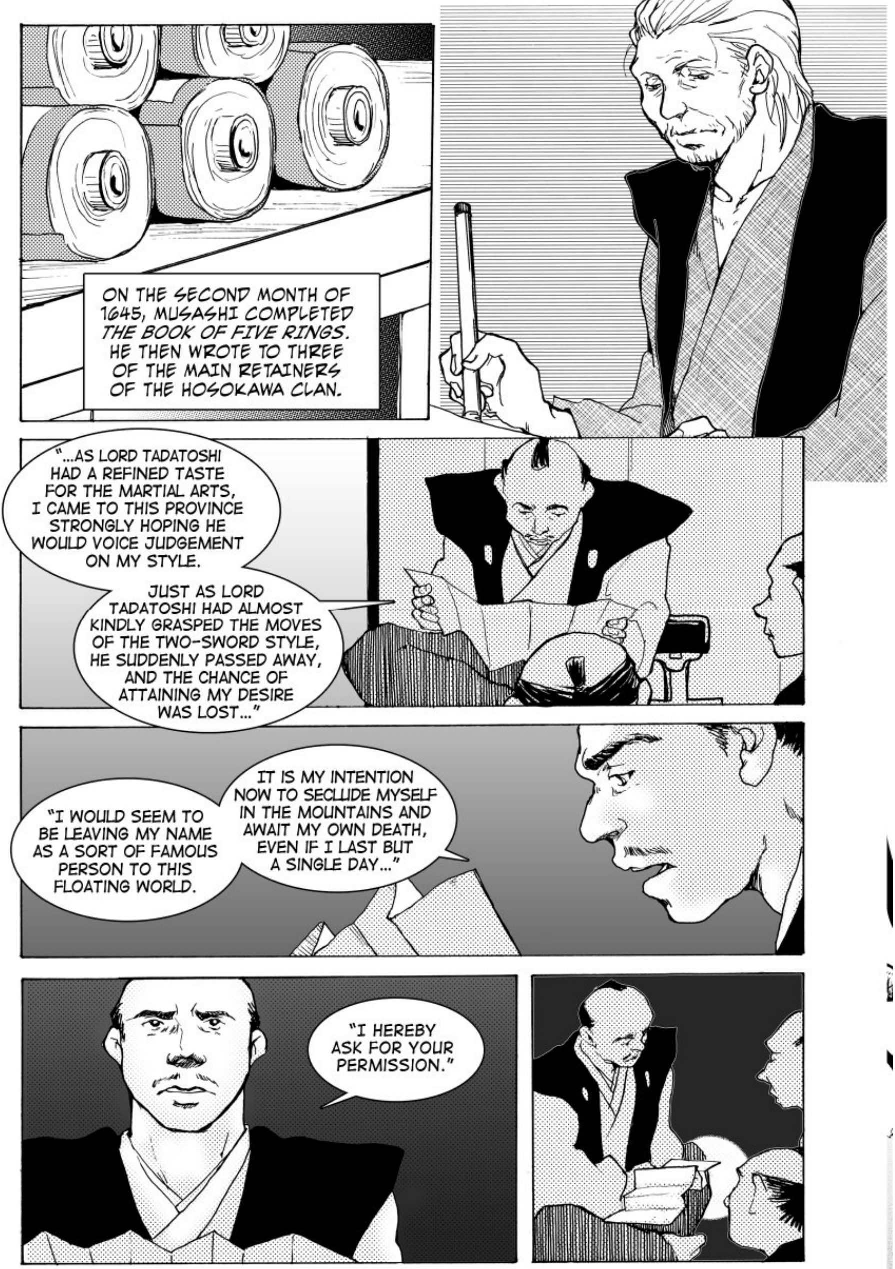

HE WAS INDEED GETTING FRAIL THEN, AS WAS SOMETIMES APPARENT.
HMMPP
MAY I HELP YOU, MUSASHI-SAMA?
THANK YOU. THERE IS NO NEED, IT'S JUST A SMALL PAIN.

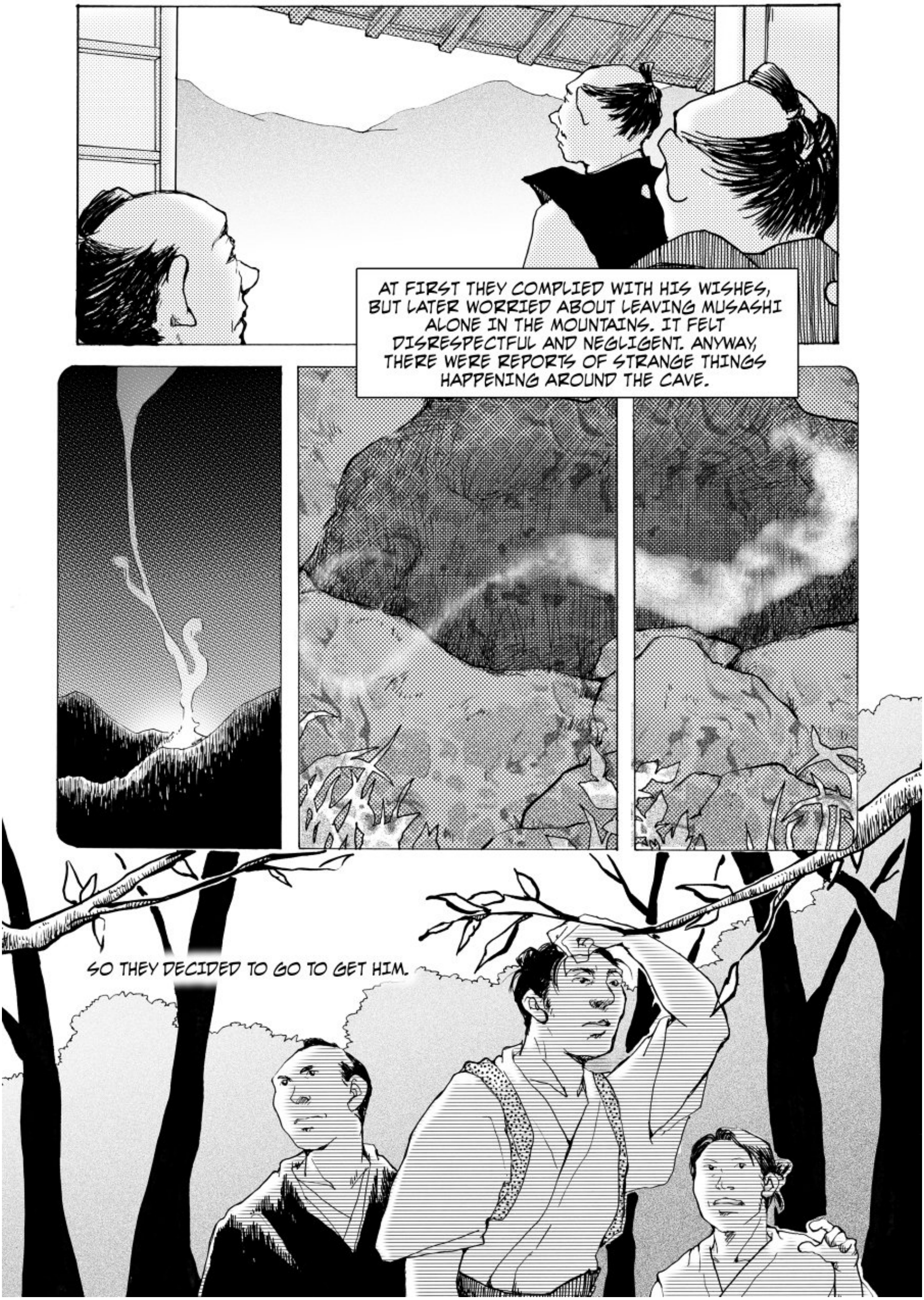

BUT EVEN THEN HE WAS CAPABLE OF SURPRISING FEATS... ONE TIME A FIRE BROKE OUT IN THE YAOYAMACHI AREA OF KUMAMOTO.
IT'S SPREADING TOO FAST!
CRAAACKK
SWWAAAP!
CRAKK

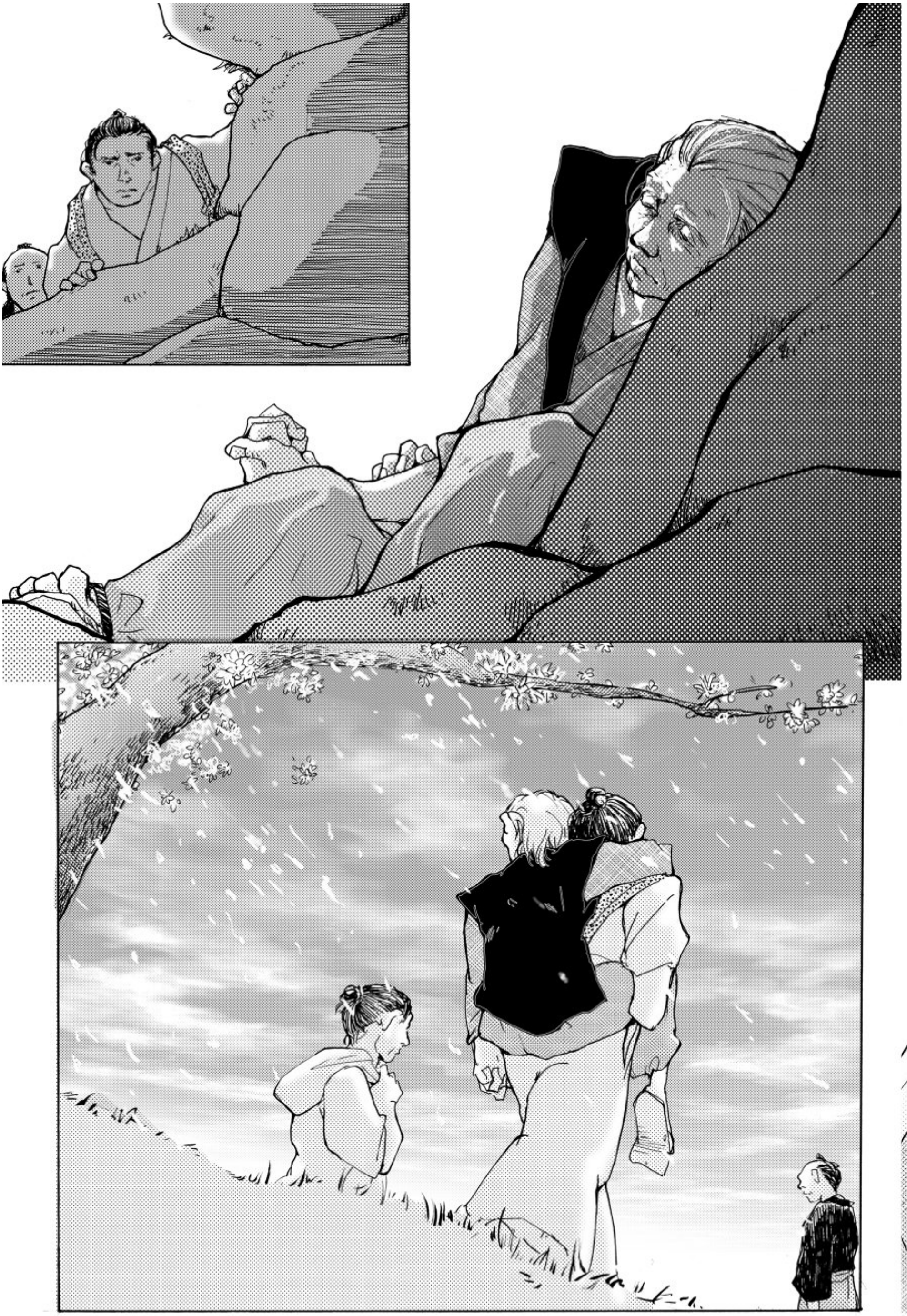

HOW IS THAT...!?
CRAACCKK
PEOPLE WERE AMAZED AT HIS AGILITY AND COURAGE.

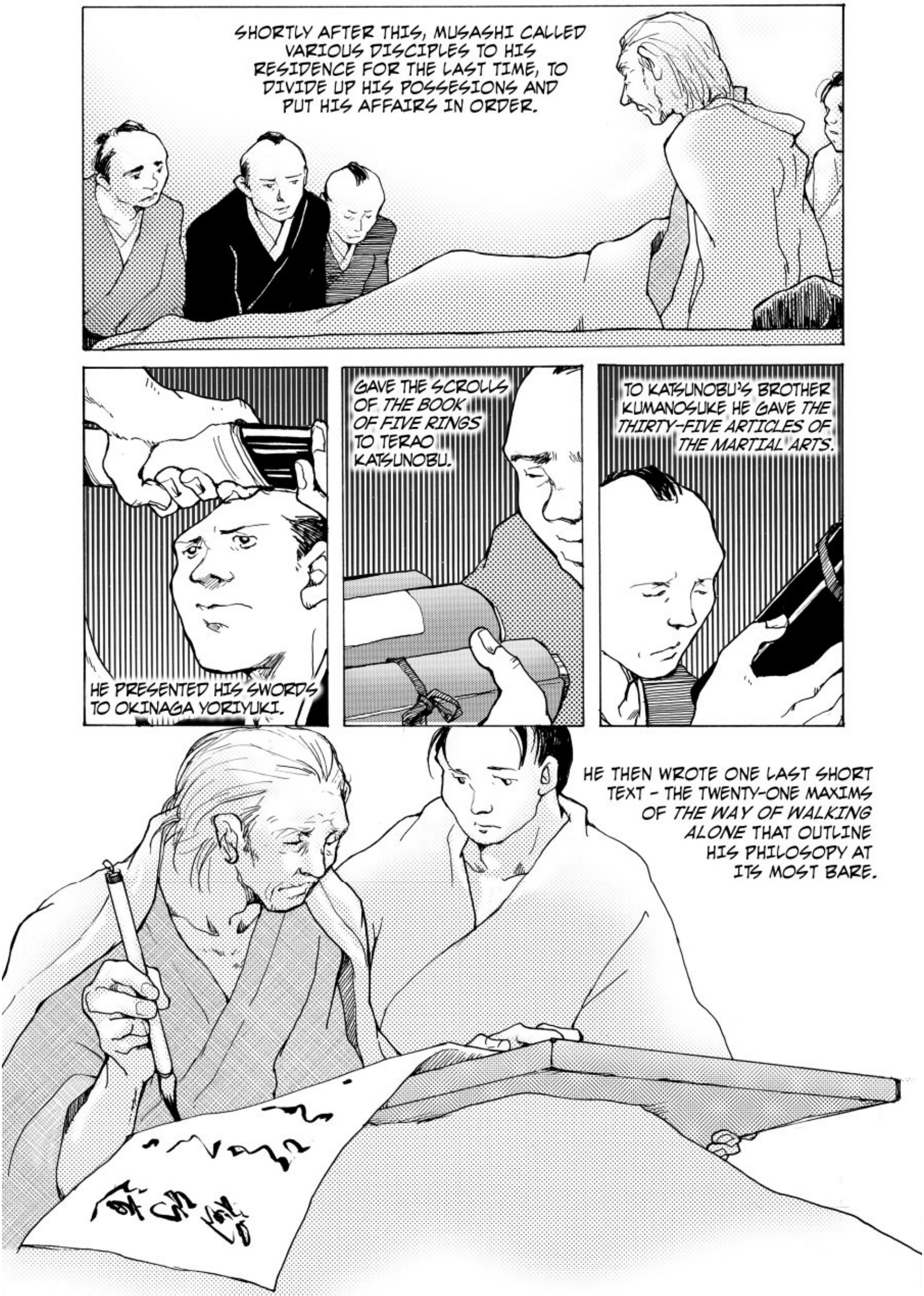

ON ANOTHER OCCASION, LORD TADATOSHI'S SON, YORIYUKI, VISITED MUSASHI.
HOW CAN I WORK OUT WHICH POLES ARE BEST TO USE FOR BANNERS?
THAT IS EASY.
KAA
KAATAN

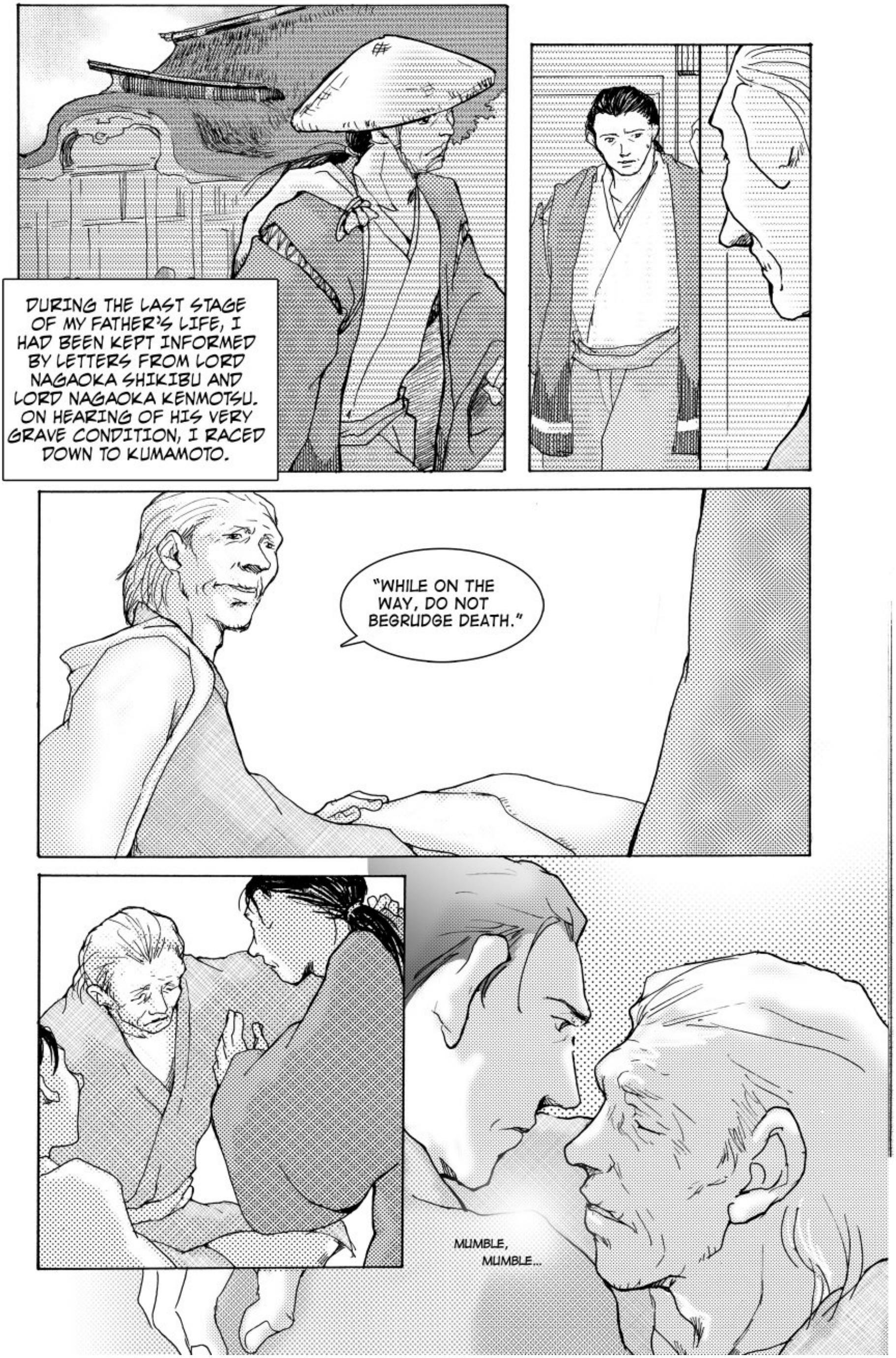

I SUPPOSE THESE ONES ARE ALRIGHT.
A GOOD METHOD, SENSEI - BUT ONE THAT SEEMS LIMITED TO A MAN A BIT STRONGER THAN MYSELF!

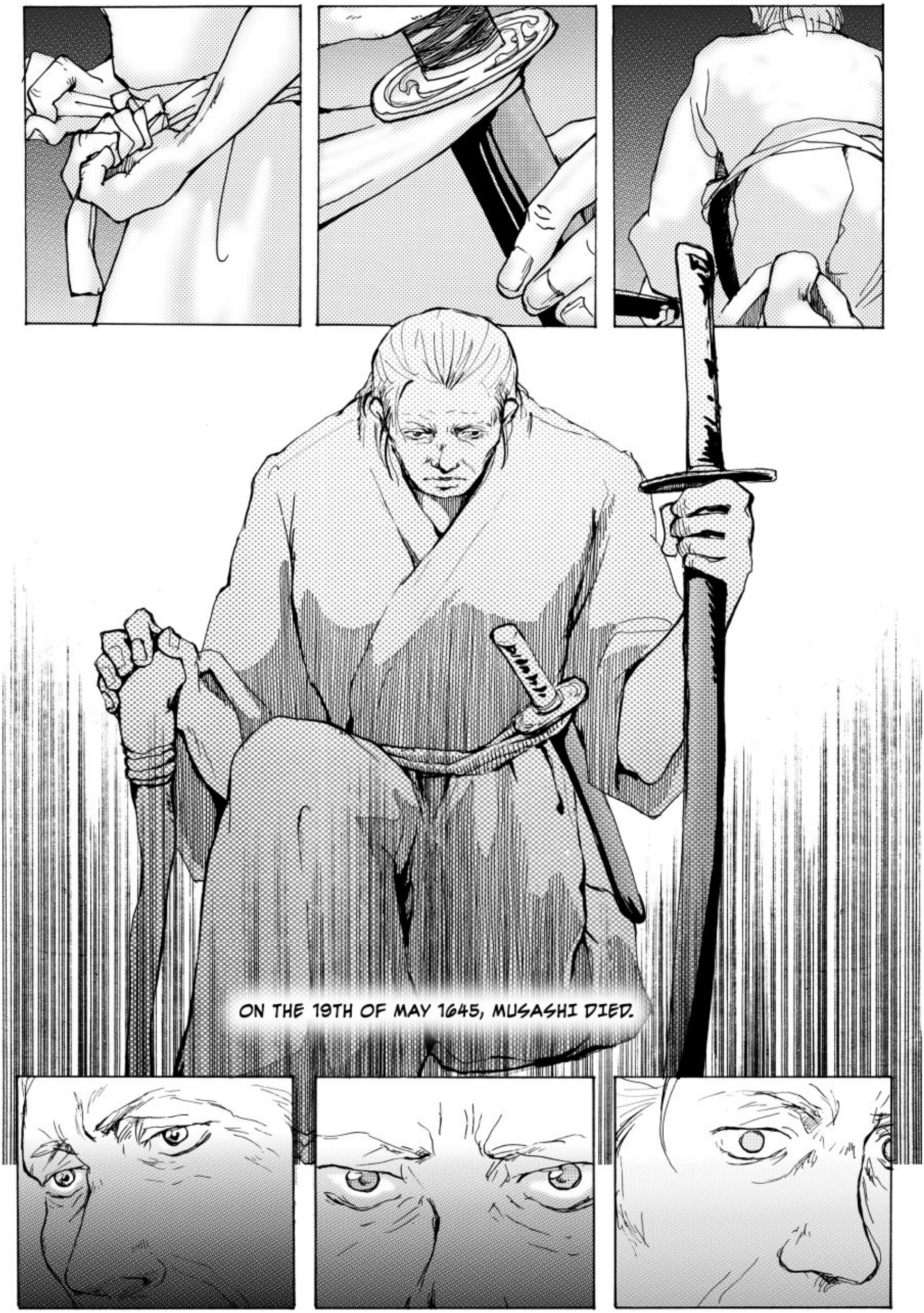

ON THE SECOND MONTH OF 1645, MUSASHI COMPLETED *THE BOOK OF FIVE RINGS*. HE THEN WROTE TO THREE OF THE MAIN RETAINERS OF THE HOSOKAWA CLAN.
"...AS LORD TADATOSHI HAD A REFINED TASTE FOR THE MARTIAL ARTS, I CAME TO THIS PROVINCE STRONGLY HOPING HE WOULD VOICE JUDGEMENT ON MY STYLE.
JUST AS LORD TADATOSHI HAD ALMOST KINDLY GRASPED THE MOVES OF THE TWO-SWORD STYLE, HE SUDDENLY PASSED AWAY, AND THE CHANCE OF ATTAINING MY DESIRE WAS LOST..."
"I WOULD SEEM TO BE LEAVING MY NAME AS A SORT OF FAMOUS PERSON TO THIS FLOATING WORLD.
IT IS MY INTENTION NOW TO SECLUDE MYSELF IN THE MOUNTAINS AND AWAIT MY OWN DEATH, EVEN IF I LAST BUT A SINGLE DAY..."
"I HEREBY ASK FOR YOUR PERMISSION."

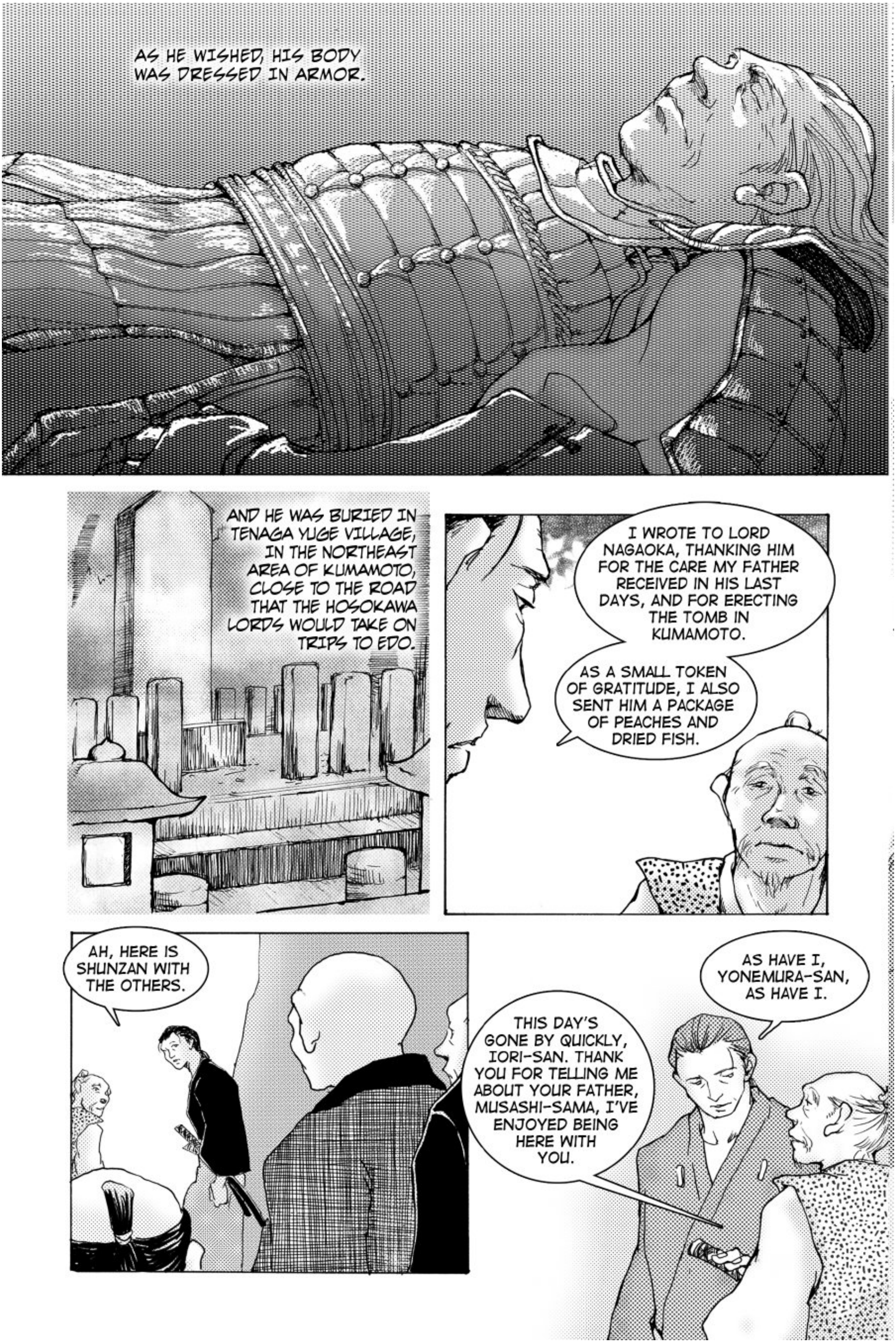

AT FIRST THEY COMPLIED WITH HIS WISHES, BUT LATER WORRIED ABOUT LEAVING MUSASHI ALONE IN THE MOUNTAINS. IT FELT DISRESPECTFUL AND NEGLIGENT. ANYWAY, THERE WERE REPORTS OF STRANGE THINGS HAPPENING AROUND THE CAVE.
SO THEY DECIDED TO GO TO GET HIM.

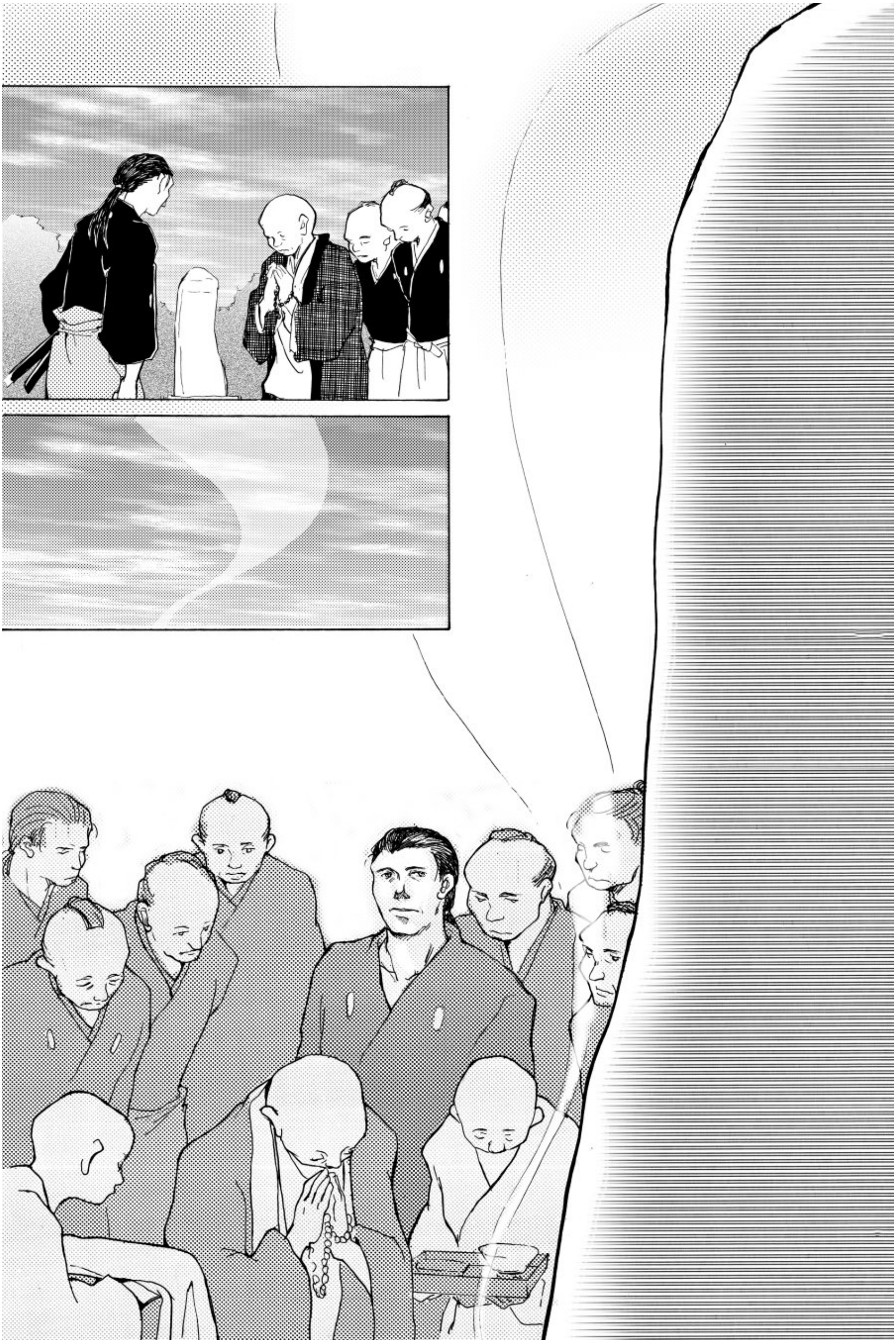


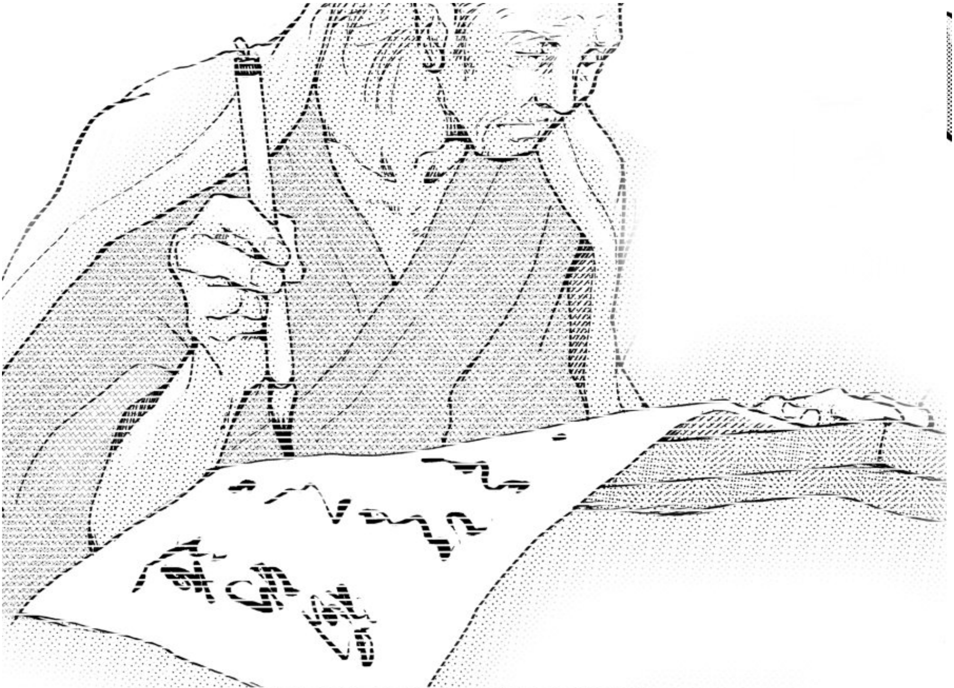

SHORTLY AFTER THIS, MUSASHI CALLED VARIOUS DISCIPLES TO HIS RESIDENCE FOR THE LAST TIME, TO DIVIDE UP HIS POSSESIONS AND PUT HIS AFFAIRS IN ORDER.
HE PRESENTED HIS SWORDS TO OKINAGA YORIYUKI.
GAVE THE SCROLLS OF *THE BOOK OF FIVE RINGS* TO TERAO KATSUNOBU.
TO KATSUNOBU'S BROTHER KUMANOSUKE HE GAVE *THE THIRTY-FIVE ARTICLES OF THE MARTIAL ARTS*.
HE THEN WROTE ONE LAST SHORT TEXT - THE TWENTY-ONE MAXIMS OF *THE WAY OF WALKING ALONE* THAT OUTLINE HIS PHILOSOPY AT ITS MOST BARE.


DURING THE LAST STAGE OF MY FATHER'S LIFE, I HAD BEEN KEPT INFORMED BY LETTERS FROM LORD NAGAOKA SHIKIBU AND LORD NAGAOKA KENMOTSU. ON HEARING OF HIS VERY GRAVE CONDITION, I RACED DOWN TO KUMAMOTO.
"WHILE ON THE WAY, DO NOT BEGRUDGE DEATH."
MUMBLE, MUMBLE...


ON THE 19TH OF MAY 1645, MUSASHI DIED.


AS HE WISHED, HIS BODY WAS DRESSED IN ARMOR.
AND HE WAS BURIED IN TENAGA YUGE VILLAGE, IN THE NORTHEAST AREA OF KUMAMOTO, CLOSE TO THE ROAD THAT THE HOSOKAWA LORDS WOULD TAKE ON TRIPS TO EDO.
I WROTE TO LORD NAGAOKA, THANKING HIM FOR THE CARE MY FATHER RECEIVED IN HIS LAST DAYS, AND FOR ERECTING THE TOMB IN KUMAMOTO.
AS A SMALL TOKEN OF GRATITUDE, I ALSO SENT HIM A PACKAGE OF PEACHES AND DRIED FISH.
AH, HERE IS SHUNZAN WITH THE OTHERS.
THIS DAY'S GONE BY QUICKLY, IORI-SAN. THANK YOU FOR TELLING ME ABOUT YOUR FATHER, MUSASHI-SAMA, I'VE ENJOYED BEING HERE WITH YOU.
AS HAVE I, YONEMURA-SAN, AS HAVE I.





DO NOT TURN YOUR BACK ON THE VARIOUS WAYS OF THIS WORLD.
DO NOT SCHEME FOR PHYSICAL PLEASURE.
DO NOT INTEND TO RELY ON ANYTHING.
CONSIDER YOURSELF LIGHTLY; CONSIDER THE WORLD DEEPLY.
DO NOT EVER THINK IN ACQUISITIVE TERMS.
DO NOT REGRET THINGS ABOUT YOUR OWN PERSONAL LIFE.
DO NOT ENVY ANOTHER'S GOOD OR EVIL.
DO NOT LAMENT PARTING ON ANY ROAD WHATSOEVER.
DO NOT COMPLAIN OR FEEL BITTERLY ABOUT YOURSELF OR OTHERS.
HAVE NO HEART FOR APPROACHNG THE PATH OF LOVE.
DO NOT HAVE PREFERENCES.
DO NOT HARBOR HOPES FOR YOUR OWN PERSONAL HOME.
DO NOT HAVE A LIKING FOR DELICIOUS FOOD FOR YOURSELF.
DO NOT CARRY ANTIQUES HANDED DOWN FROM GENERATION TO GENERATION.
DO NOT FAST SO THAT IT AFFECTS YOU PHYSICALLY.
WHILE MILITARY EQUIPMENT IS ANOTHER MATTER, DO NOT BE FOND OF MATERIAL THINGS.
WHILE ON THE WAY, DO NOT BEGRUDGE DEATH.
DO NOT BE INTENT ON POSSESSING VALUABLES OR A FIEF IN OLD AGE.
RESPECT THE GODS AND THE BUDDHAS, BUT DO NOT RELY ON THEM.
THOUGH YOU GIVE UP YOUR LIFE, DO NOT GIVE UP YOUR HONOR.
NEVER DEPART FROM THE WAY OF THE MARTIAL ARTS.

AFTERWORD

The main source of research for this gra
William Scott Wilson, my "Uncle in Am
joke. His two books on Musashi, *The*
translation of *The Book of Five Rings,* ar
—and I have quoted and paraphrased m
books in this graphic novel. I have als
other books and source material. S
Kumamoto, where Musashi spent the la
gained more information at several ke
him, such as the mysterious Reigando Ca

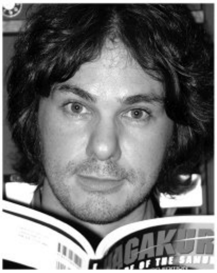
What is the monument that is the cent
book? This was erected in 1654 on Mour
Kokura by Musashi's adopted so
commemorate his father. We have used
tell the story of his father in order that

of distance from our main subject that

that does not dissipate the mystery of the

Our twin aim in *Musashi,* and all ou
Japanese history, martial arts, and
represented by these two poles: accurac
what is considered to be historically co
be 100 percent sure of the details of any
try to get close. In a world dominated
take great liberties with the facts, we fe
close attention to accuracy is something
an effort to avoid cliché and hyperbo
version subtle and sophisticated. We hop
an interesting graphic novel of the life of

—SEAN MICHAEL WILSON


ACAKUR
OF THE SAMU

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

SEAN MICHAEL WILSON is a comic book writer who lives in Japan. published numerous comics and graphi with a variety of US, UK, and Ja publishers, including *Hagakure, The* *Five Rings,* and *The 47 Ronin.* He is a editor of the critically acclaimed *Ax:* *tive Manga.*

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

MICHIRU MORIKAWA is a Japane
lustrator and manga artist and winner o
2005 International Manga and Anime A
With Sean Michael Wilson, she has cr
the graphic novels *Buskers, Yakuza M*
and *The Demon's Sermon on the Martial*

THE BOOK OF FIVE RINGS
A GRAPHIC NOVEL
FROM THE BOOK BY MIYAMOTO MUSASHI
ADAPTED BY SEAN MICHAEL WILSON
ILLUSTRATED BY CHIE KUTSUWADA
BASED ON THE TRANSLATION BY WILLIAM SCOTT WILSON

ALSO AVAILABLE FROM SHAMBHALA PUBLICATIO

GRAPHIC NOVELS BY SEAN MIC

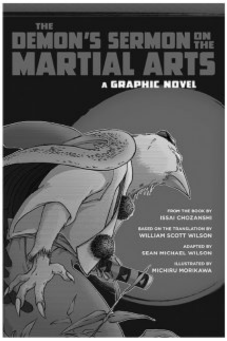
THE BOOK OF FIVE RINGS

“Truly a tribute to the original [classic].
There is a tremendous amount of depth a
insight into this work, an exploration of
the five elements of life (the ‘five rings’ o
the title) that represent the cosmic Buddh
Readers get complex but eminently reada
explorations of each ring and are led to se
them all together as an overriding philoso
phy that enriches and broadens the life o
any reader.”

—Jason Sacks, *Comics Bulletin*

“This graphic adaptation of Musashi’s sev
century treatise on
the martial arts makes careful, effective u
both the narrative and instructional aspe
Musashi’s lessons, in their focus on prepa

easily be applied to most areas of life. Ku
clean, balancing the physiological dynam
eyed appreciation of Musashi's natural er
thoughtful update of what could be esote
—***Publishers Weekly***


THE DEMON'S SERMON ON THE MARTIAL ARTS
A GRAPHIC NOVEL
FROM THE BOOK BY ISSAI CHOZANSHI
BASED ON THE TRANSLATION BY WILLIAM SCOTT WILSON
ADAPTED BY SEAN MICHAEL WILSON
ILLUSTRATED BY MICHIRU MORIKAWA

THE DEMON’S SERMON OF THE MART

“As a book of philosophy, it’s fascinating
a dreamlike exploration of consciousness
life, and death. Michiru Morikawa’s artwork is the perfect match for the text, her
eerie, detailed illustrations—
especially the lovely renderings of variou
animals—
perfectly fitting the poetic feel.
Recommended.”

—Jason Thompson,
***Otaku USA* magazine**

“Wilson and Morikawa capture all the wi
original texts and enhance them with the
charms of modern manga. Their faithful
ical fables and philosophical reflections p
warding they truly are.”

—Paul Gravett, editor of
1001 Comics You Must Read before You

THE 47 RONIN
A GRAPHIC NOVEL
SEAN MICHAEL WILSON
ILLUSTRATED BY AKIKO SHIMOJIMA

THE 47 RONIN

“A masterful retelling of one of the grea
stories in Japanese culture. An engross
engaging, emotional, and unforgetta
epic.”

—Jonathan Ross,
BBC television presenter

“Wilson uses exactly the right scenes to
this famous story, creating a quick, eng
ing read.”

—Library Journal

“A dignified telling of a dignified story.
be, precise and calm when it’s called fo
This is a tightly focused, perfectly pitche
perfect entry point for anyone coming t
The Keanu Reeves version may have a
sion has all the heart.”

—BleedingCool.com

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